

ISSUE # 8

# BIZARRE BEYOND BELIEF

ARTS x CULTURE x MAGAZINE





# BIZARRE BEYOND BELIEF

## ARTS x CULTURE x MAGAZINE

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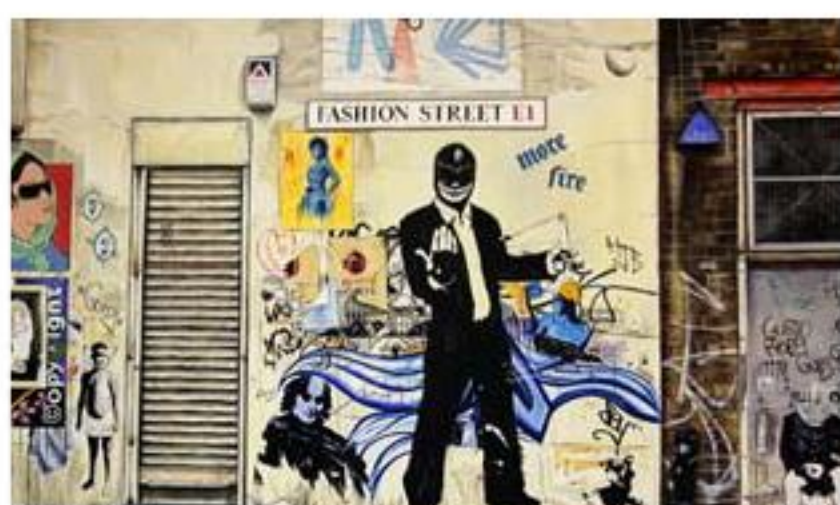
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Dedicated to the brilliant, beautiful and bizarre. Whimsical tales, visuals and various odds and ends about obscure and misunderstood sub-cultures.

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Myndalen 2012





# MOTEL6 [GH]

MOTEL HAS BEEN A LONG FRIEND OF BBB AND WE'RE EXTREMELY EXCITED TO HAVE HIM IN THIS ISSUE. AN INFAMOUS TORONTO WRITER WITH LOADS OF TALENT IN EVERY ASPECT OF GRAFFITI. WE'RE SURE IF YOU DON'T KNOW THIS GUY ALREADY, HE WILL DEFINITELY BE A NEW FAVOURITE.





**Bizarre Beyond Belief:** Considering graffiti has a number of element to its practice, such as tagging, bombing, piecing, etc. Is there a particular facet of the art form you enjoy above others?

MOTEL: Well, I would have to say my preferred element has changed over the years. Like most writers, I started tagging and bombing and gradually worked my way up the chain. I still really get off on tagging and bombing but I don't put in anywhere near the same amount of effort. For the better part of my career, I have been working towards painting the best piece I can.

That is route I have put the most energy into and enjoy the most. Painting burners on freight trains is also extremely fun for me. It's cool when your work gets spotted. Especially now that everyone is so networked through different social media sites.

**BBB:** Considering you have been living abroad recently, how do you feel this has helped your practice as an artist?

MOTEL: It has been an adventure living in Europe for sure. I moved to Stockholm about a year ago and it is probably the worst city for

graffiti in Europe. By that I mean it has a zero graffiti policy. Only one legal wall, a private security company who's only job is to find and arrest graffiti writers, as well as the regular vandal squad, and on top of it the public has bought into this idea and there are lots of heroes. This coming from Toronto where, in comparison, you can pretty much do whatever you want. So, it took me a while to get over that but after a while I embraced the whole illegal side and now I paint mostly illegal pieces oh and I am a lot more paranoid now. Though besides that, living here has given me the opportunity to



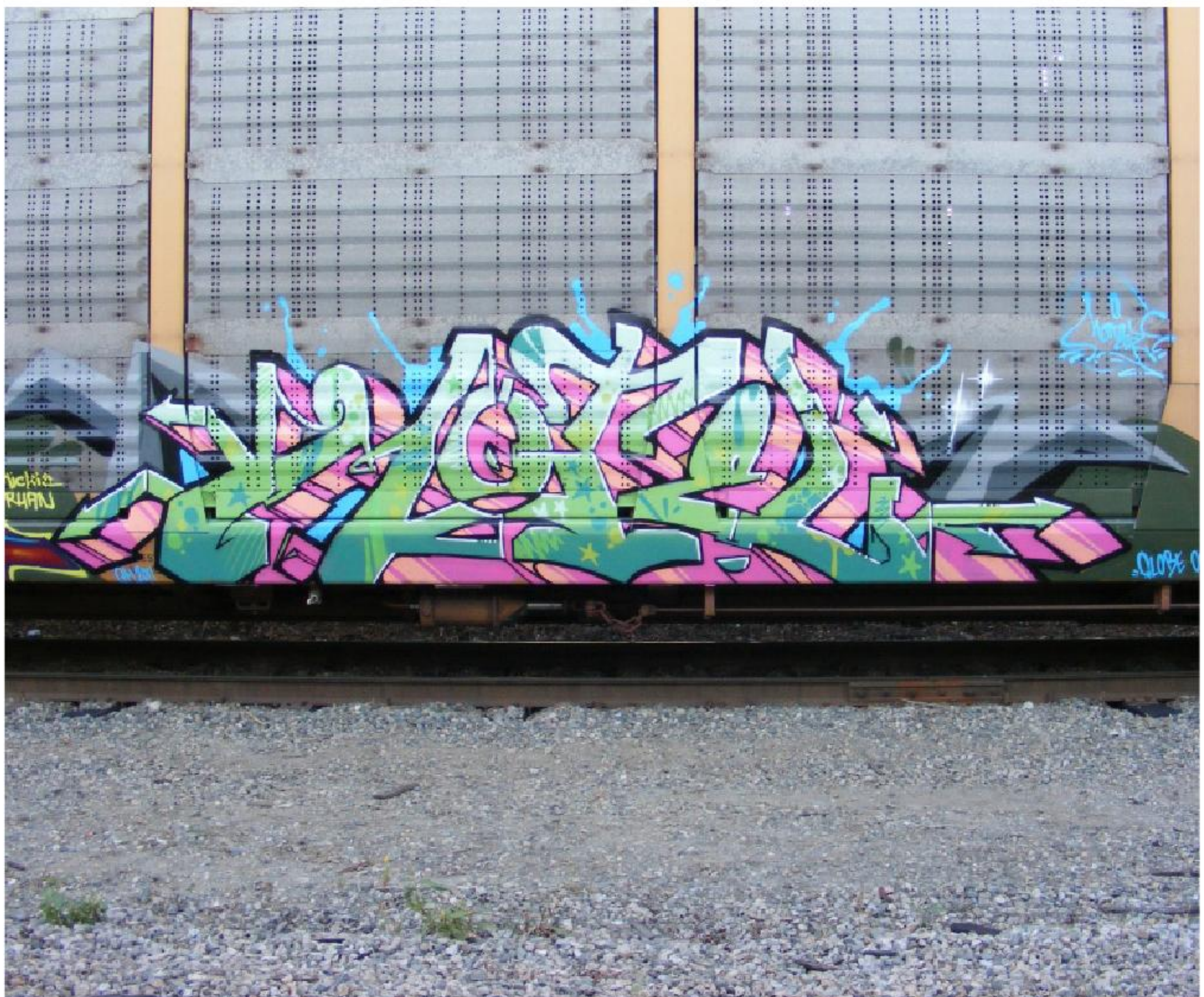
do some of the things I meant to do but never got around to. I have been practicing and enhancing my design skills, although I haven't really got around to making much fine art out here. It was something I meant to do but haven't really had the space for it.

**BBB: What would you say the primary differences, both**

**good and bad, are between from Toronto to Europe?**

MOTEL: Well, as I said earlier, the community is much more accepting of graffiti in general. By that I mean Toronto vs. Stockholm. Toronto has legal walls and people like graffiti there. But there is a reason for it. Toronto doesn't have a clean train/subway painting

scene like in Stockholm. People have been killing the subway in Stockholm since the mid 80s. At one point the city had enough and hired a company called CSG, the private graff squad and then everything changed. People still paint the subway here a lot and if you get arrested painting the tunnels or a train here, chances are your







house is getting raided. As for the rest of Europe, it is all so different. Each city has different rules and views. My favorite place for painting so has to be Copenhagen. It reminds me of Montreal but you can drink on the street and there are maybe even more spots to paint. But to top it off the Danish people are some of

the nicest people around. I can't wait to go back. Though I would have to say that Italy, both Milan and Rome are two places I really am itching to go.

**BBB: Though focusing primarily on graffiti, you have a fine art practice as well. How would you describe your approach to each medium?**

**MOTEL:** I have always been artistically inclined and I was lucky enough to channel somewhat of a career in the arts. I have worked in the film/television/animation industry on and off since 2001. Funny enough being a graffiti writer gave me an edge and working in animation exposed me to things I incorporated into



my graffiti. Though when it comes down to sitting down and making some fine art I try to do something different than I would on a wall. At this point of my game, I am still experimenting on canvas and try incorporating different techniques I have learned through my life. One thing I feel is that I would like to explore more in that area but haven't really had the chance to yet.

**BBB: Besides graffiti, what are 5 things that you hold the**

**nearest and dearest to your heart?**

MOTEL: Hahaha. Wasn't expecting this question. HHHMMmmmm. I guess first would be my beautiful and amazingly supporting wife Caroline, who lets me go on weeklong graffiti benders and use her as a model. I Love you baby! My cat Jinx, who can also be an annoying little shit sometimes. My crew GH, I guess you could say we are like brothers. Then my family and then fine foods and drinks.

What can I say, I love to eat and drink.

**BBB: If you were to be strapped with only one brand of can and cap for the rest of your career, which would they be and why?**

MOTEL: It is definitely a hard decision to make. I would have to go with Molotow and the grey Belton cap. I would choose that because Molotow has such a wide range of colours and is one of the most controllable paints in my





“BEING INVOLVED IN GRAFFITI HAS LEAD TO WHO I AM TODAY.  
IT HAS OPENED A LOT DOORS, LEAD TO ME MEETING SOME OF  
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opinion. The reason for the cap would be that it is medium ranged cap that you can fill and outline with. You can also do some tricks with it.

**BBB: Where do you see yourself as not only an artist but as an individual in 10, 20 and 30 years?**

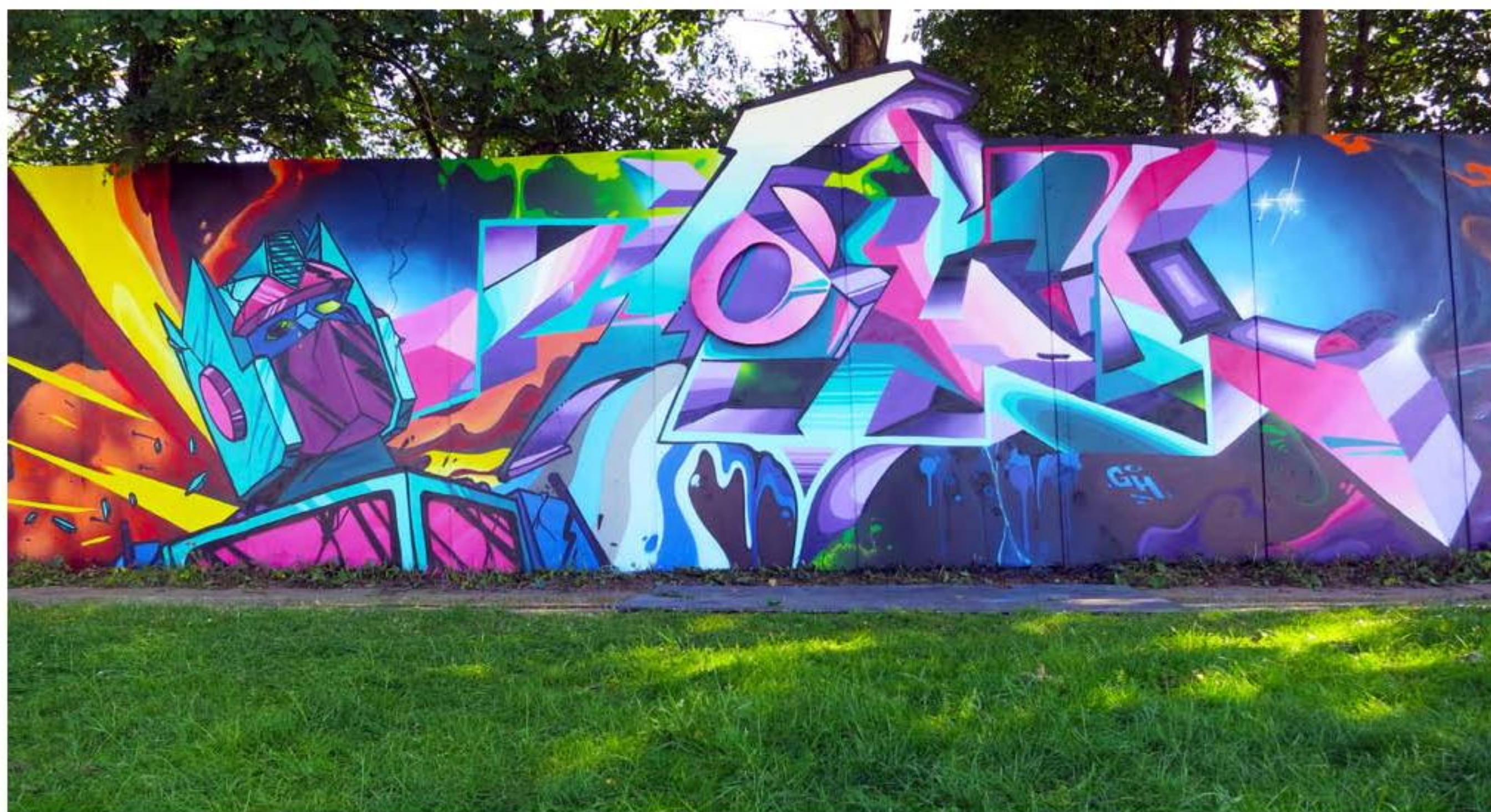
MOTEL: It is definitely hard to say. Although I do see myself with kids within the next 10 years for sure. I plan on continuing to work within the arts/digital media side of things and hopefully becoming more successful in that area. During that time I hope to

travel and live more places around the world. Definitely painting as much as I can before having kids. Also as I said earlier I hope to expand into more of the fine art side of things, but I don't really feel there is a rush with that.

**BBB: Can you describe the first time you went painting?**

MOTEL: I always loved seeing graffiti when I was young. I remember going downtown with my mom as a kid and loving the graff walls. Graffiti was mysterious and I didn't understand it. It wasn't until sometime in the early 90's that

a friend of mine who had an older brother exposed me to things like Ice T's album, The Iceberg and the movie New Jack city. For some reason he and I decided we could try doing graffiti too, I guess it was the one Hip-hop thing we could easily do. So we stole some gold markers from an art shop and did what we thought were tags. They were more like scribbles. It was only a fad and didn't last too long. It wasn't until the late 90s that I got back into it full tilt. Me and a friend of mine that stopped painting a long time ago would walk the tracks at night smoking weed and paint really bad graffiti. We gradually got











better and it grew from there.

**BBB: What is the most fucked-up thing you've seen out on a mission?**

MOTEL: One night while out street bombing by myself, I ducked off the main street

because I thought someone saw me. As I walked about half a block down the side street I came across a young couple fucking in the middle of the sidewalk. Missionary. I was just like UUhhh. The guy just glanced at me and just went back at it. I just walked around and kept on

my way.

**BBB: What's the stupidest thing you've done while out bombing?**

MOTEL: The stupidest thing would have been to let my drunken friend keep six for me. We ended up getting arrested.





I learned that you really have to gauge how drunk someone is. There is a cut off point of how well they can watch your back.

**BBB: What has painting graffiti given or taken away to you as an artist and a person?**

MOTEL: Being involved in graffiti has lead to who I am today. It has opened a lot doors, lead to me meeting some of my best friends and taken me to lots of great places. It is definitely my biggest obsession. But getting to where I am had it's ups and downs. I have been arrested a bunch of times,

gotten my ass kicked over graffiti, found my share of beefs because of it and even risked my life for it. But I still feel it was all worth it.

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[www.flickr.com/the\\_motel](http://www.flickr.com/the_motel)

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# ALEX BIERK

WE HAVE LONG BEEN HUGE FANS OF ALEX'S WORK AND HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING IT CLOSELY FOR QUITE SOME TIME. THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS, THIS GUY IS A MACHINE. HIS PAINTING SKILLS ARE AT SUCH A LEVEL THAT FEW IN THE WORLD CAN ACTUALIZE PAINTINGS THE WAY HE CAN AND HIS WORK IS SO REALISTIC THAT YOU HAVE TO ANALYSE THEM WITH A MAGNIFYING GLASS





**Bizarre Beyond Belief:**  
**Describe a day in the life of**  
**Alex Bierk, from waking til**  
**slumber...**

Alex Bierk: WORK WORK WORK!!! I get up early, get some coffee into me, and then I'm off to my studio. It's right around the corner from where I live so its really convenient. The way I paint is very tedious. I have put a lot of hours in to accomplish what most do leisurely, so with my process I have to stay really focused

throughout the day. I have to push myself. Every good artist who has been successful that I've seen has done it through hard work. I'm a believer in that. My family is a big part of my life; I'll usually see my brothers throughout the day. Two of them share a studio next door to mine. I try and make some time for my wife Amanda who's pregnant right now. Lately I've been preparing for that with my free time; it's so exciting. I'm usually running around like a madman

if I'm not at my studio.

**BBB: Can you tell us about**  
**your artistic training? Did you**  
**attend an artistic institution?**

AB: I went to The Toronto School of Art for a little while. I've worked for two very successful artists, each with very different practices, and I definitely carry those experiences with me. I left a great job working as an assistant to Kim Dorland to paint full time, and I definitely



owe a lot to him. Those were unbelievable learning experiences and they've influenced greatly how I approach making work, the way I organize and set up my studio, and given me a foot in to the door that you don't get from school. My dad was an artist, and I grew up hanging out in his studio and working there in the summer. I grew up in that environment. Also, working as a traveling sales rep for an Art Supply store really opened my eyes to the material side of things. I had to become familiar with, and know the specs on, just about anything you can find in your local art supply store.

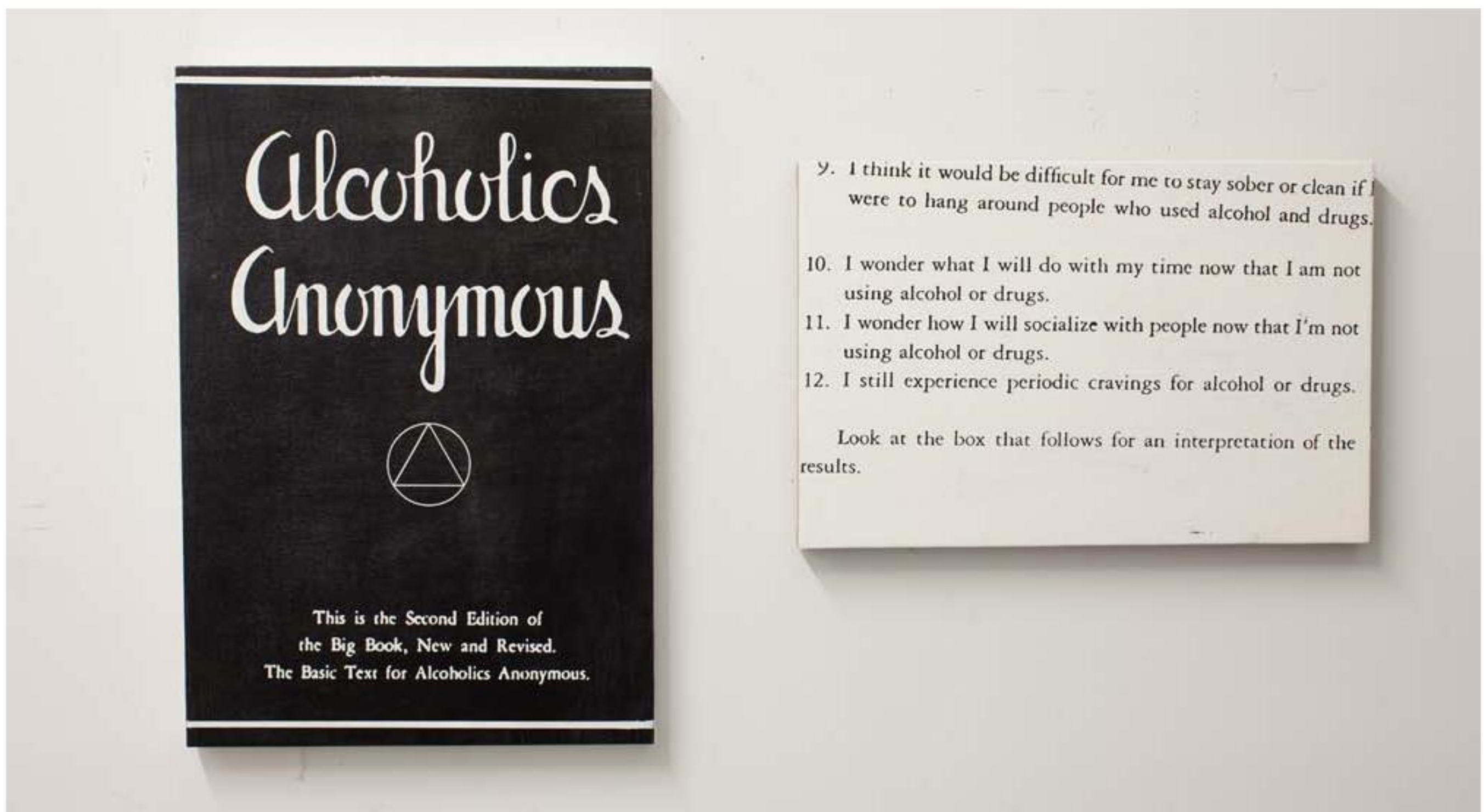
**BBB: Your artistic practice is unbelievably realistic. How do you feel when people say, why not just take a photograph instead?**

AB: I'd like to think my work holds interest beyond the way it's painted. Certain criticism of hyper-realistic work, I think, is its lack of substance. The process takes precedent. The way I paint is important but equally important are the images I choose to work from and what I'm trying to say with the work, it's deep rooted, it's honest. That being said, you can really see my hand in the finished pieces, the way the surface is prepared, the way

the image is painted. The work is labored over. You can tell it's handmade...up close anyway.

**BBB: Considering this, can you describe your approach to a painting? Do you use a photograph or do you have sitters?**

AB: I'll usually conceptualize a show from 3 or 4 images, start painting and let it go from there. As I'm working I'll get inspired by different things and dig back through my source material for new pieces. I always paint from source images. I'll edit and grid out the original and work from it square by square on







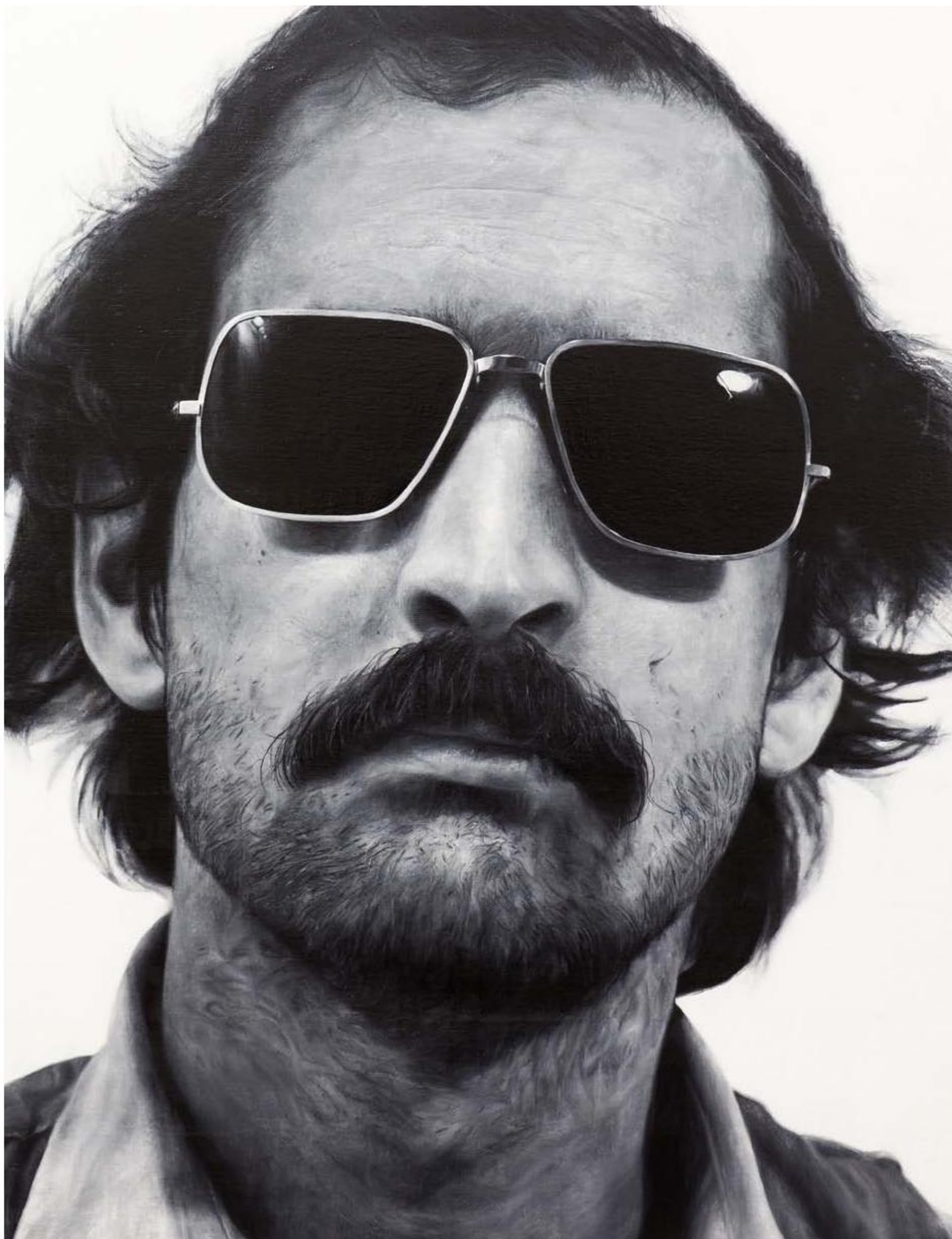
whatever gridded surface I'm using. I'm back to canvas lately, after using linen a lot. I paint one square at a time, right to left top to bottom, row by row. The more detailed the image the smaller the grid, sometimes 1/4 inch squares at a time. That's my process.

**BBB: Your paintings all tend to be in black and white. What draws you to this method, as opposed to painting in colour?**

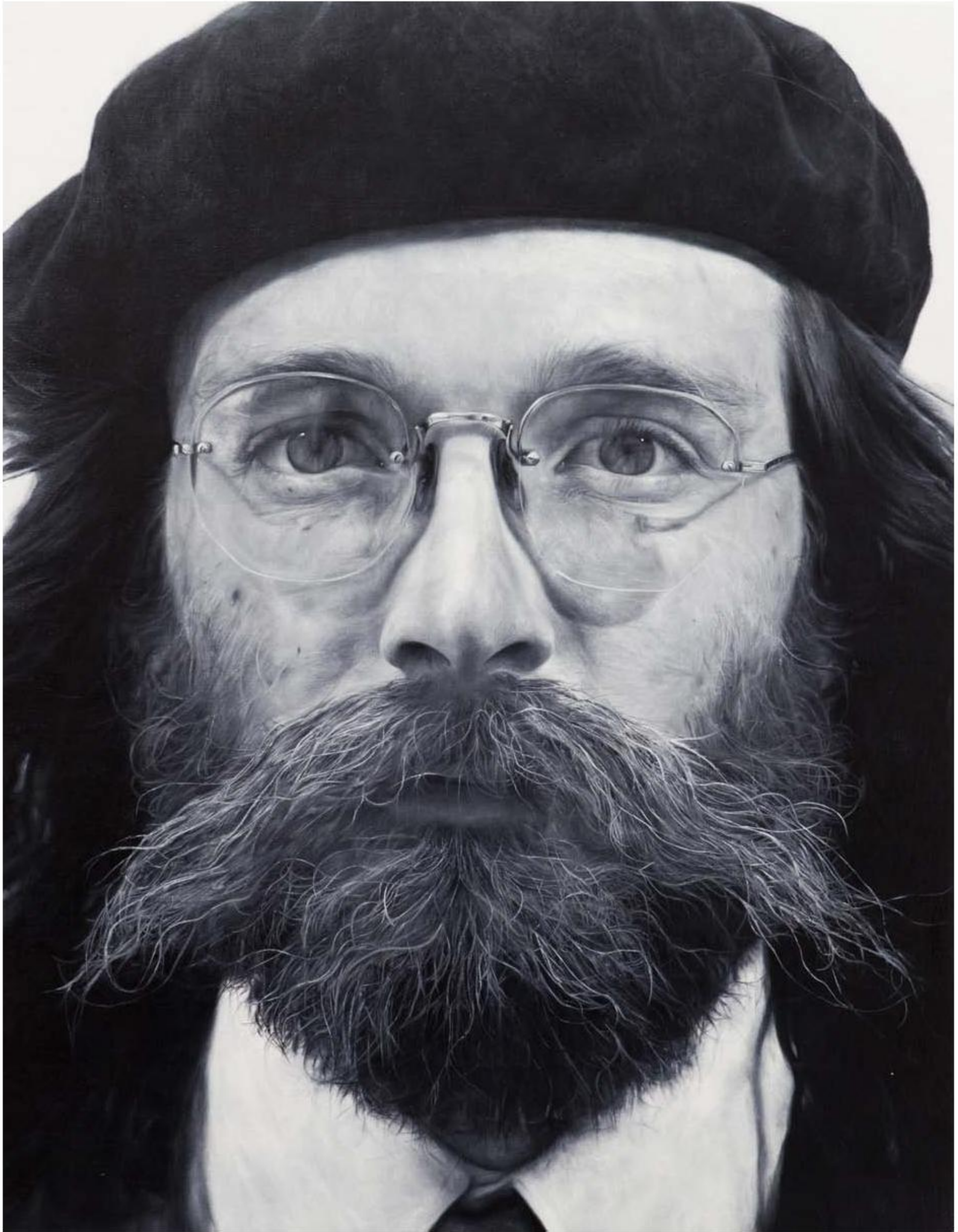
AB: There is an earnestness to my work and the tone lends itself to that. Black and white is classic, its simple. I don't invent very much on the canvas and the monochromatic palette helps keep things consistent. The series I'm working on now is from hundreds of source photographs from different periods, picked through and edited, and keeping them in black and white helps me

control the final outcome. With this series I think the palette gives the paintings a certain stillness, an eerie feeling that is captured. I'm interested in that. They are dark images to begin with and the film noir quality reinforces that. I've always loved the depth and weight found in black and white work; Larry Clark's and Richter's black and whites, and artists like Vija Celmins, Rennie Spoolstra.









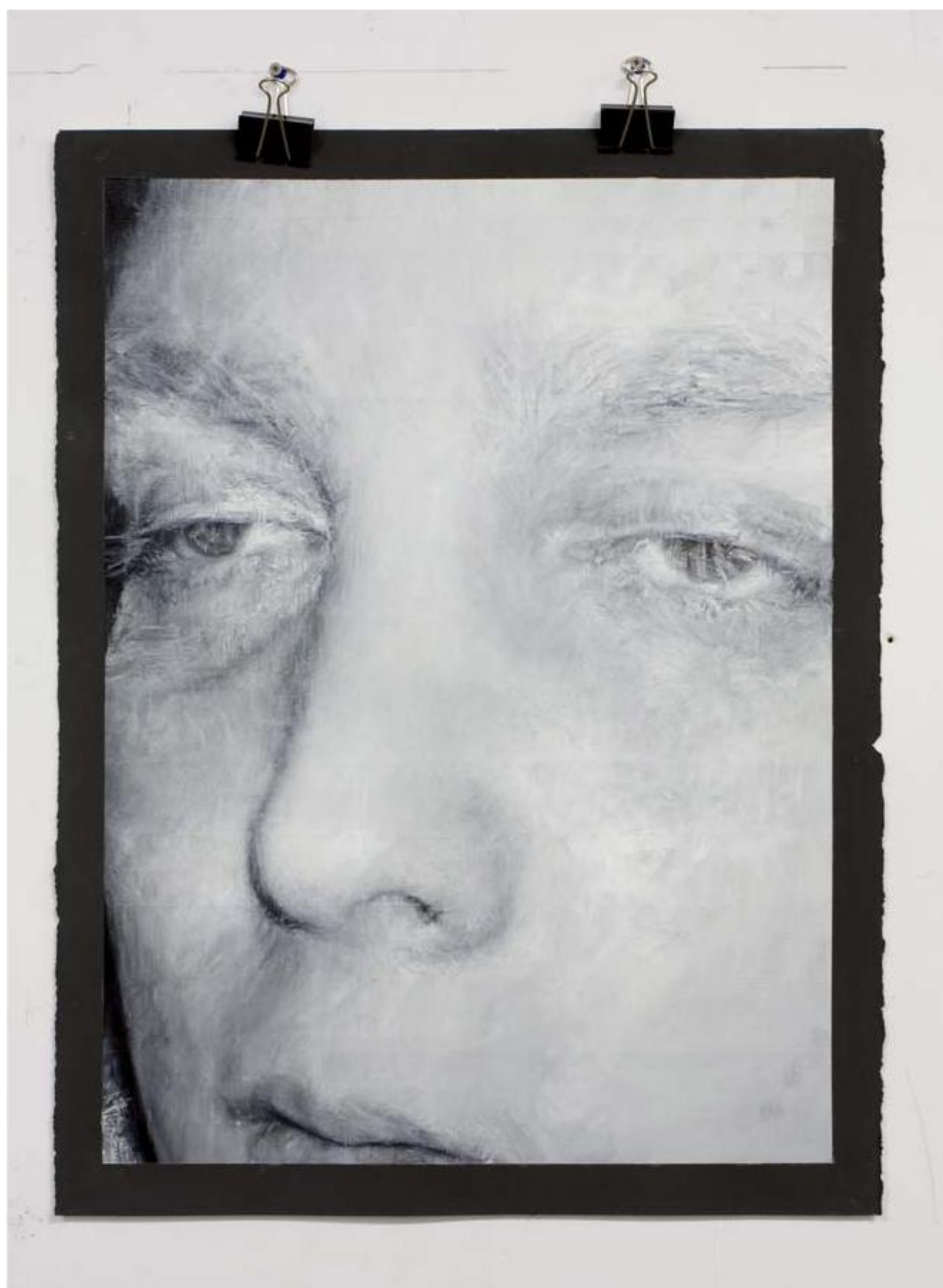


**BBB:** As a Toronto-based artist, do you feel this city has enough to offer, or would it be wiser to move out to a bigger market like New York or London?

**AB:** I've always loved the idea of settling down somewhere smaller actually. The great thing about being an artist is once you're established you can really do it from anywhere. I'm torn though, I love the culture of the city (Toronto) or somewhere like New York... but to answer your question, I think you can definitely tap into those markets without making the move.

**BBB:** Do you feel as if the arts community in Toronto is thriving or thin?

**AB:** I think thriving.... I'm proud to be part of it, even if in a very small way. I just got back from New York and Niall McClelland (Toronto based artist) had a great opening at a gallery on the Lower East Side, Katharine Mulherin has a really beautiful space there too (MULHERIN + POLLARD, a sister space to her gallery in Toronto) it was great to see...I think Toronto has a



really important community of artist that are making good work, and making a name for themselves not only locally but internationally.

**BBB:** If for some reason you could not paint, draw or pursue art, what other employment avenue would

you take and why?

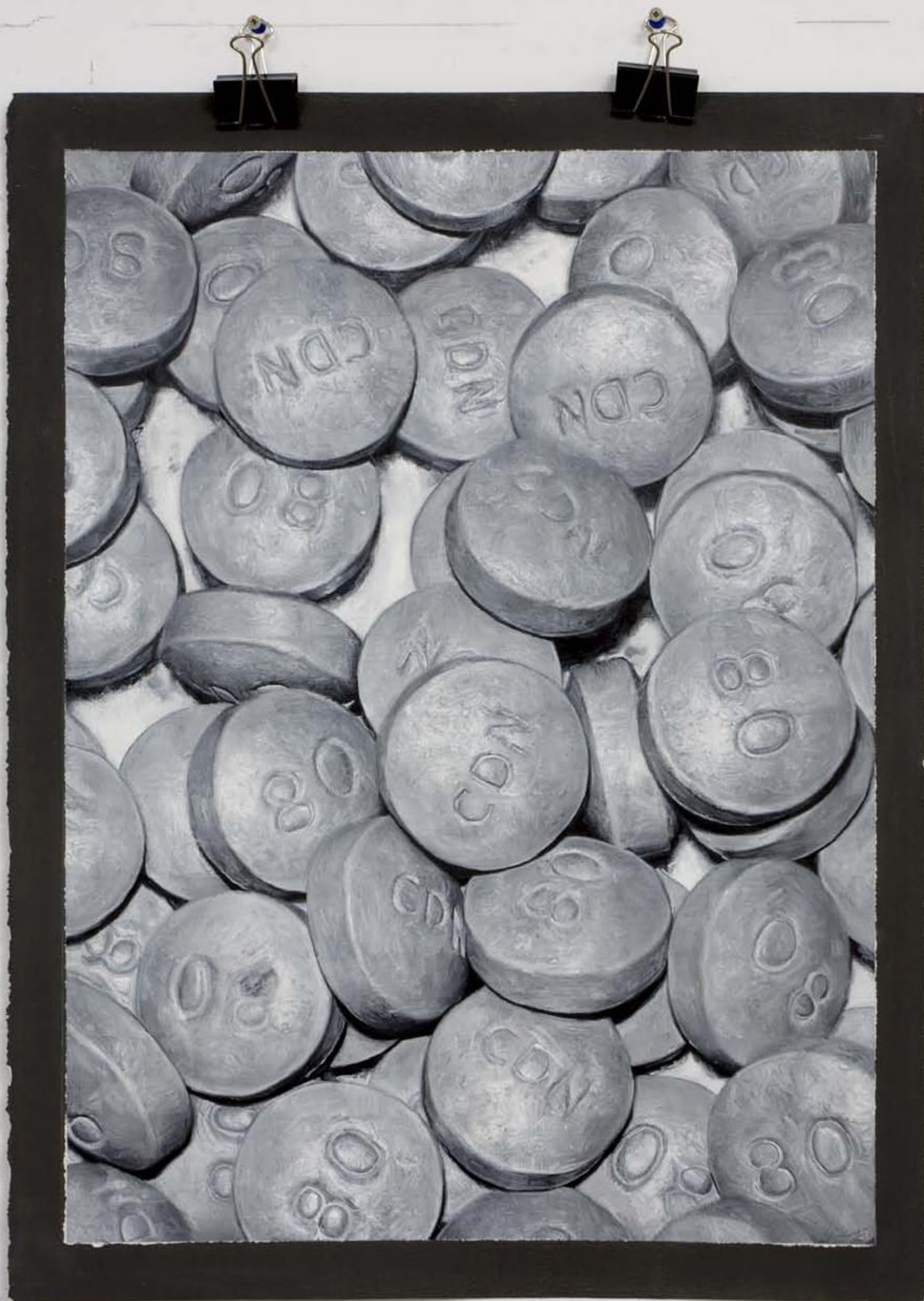
**AB:** I don't even want to think about that, I don't have a plan b. Some people have a good voice and can sing, some people are good at fixing cars or have a good slapshot. I can paint. That's it, all or nothing.



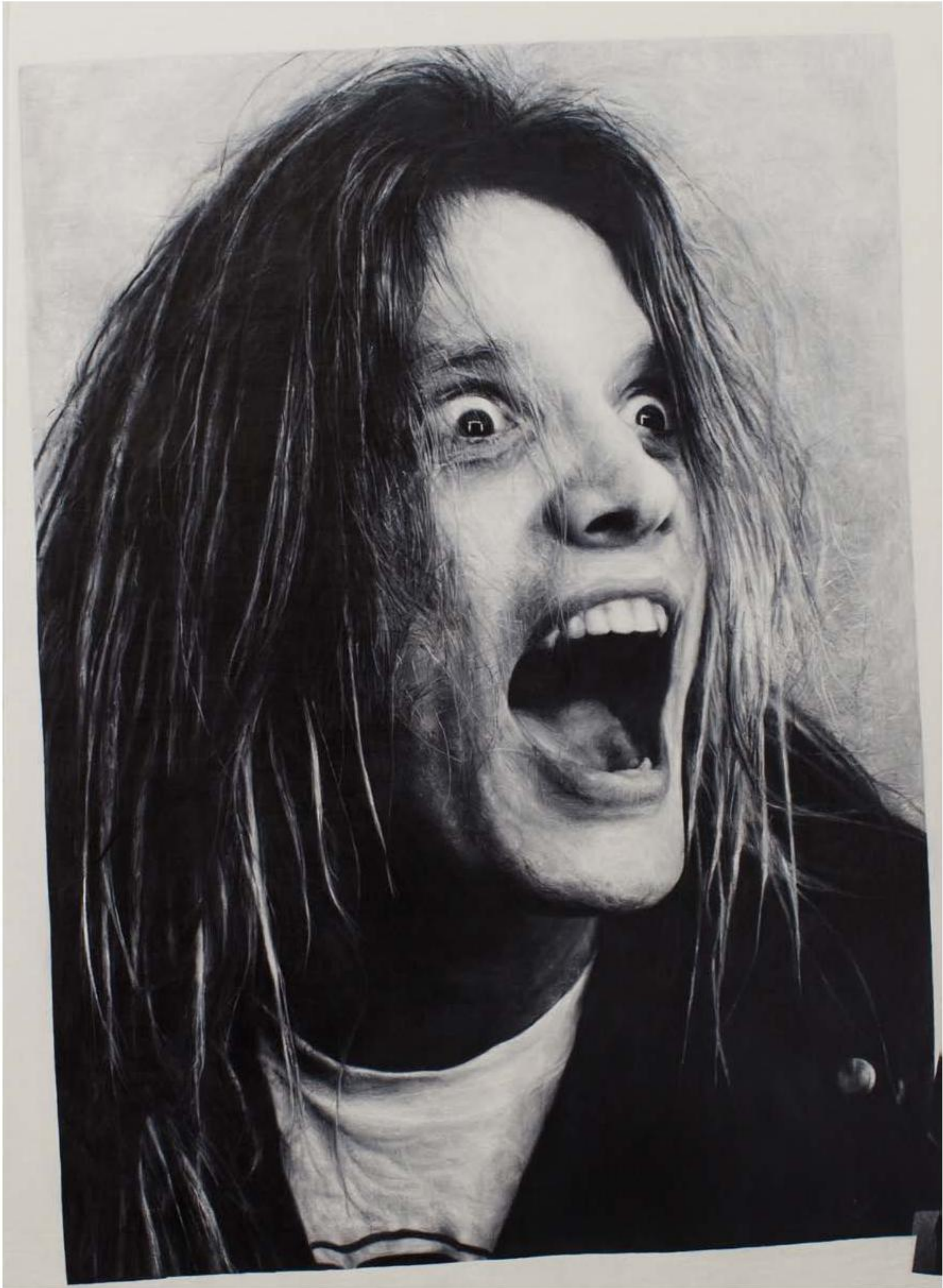
“

I CAN PAINT. THAT'S IT, ALL OR NOTHING.

”









**BBB: Where does Alex Bierk see himself at the end of 2013? Are there any projects the readers should be on the lookout for?**

AB: --I have a few projects on the go. I just finished work that went to a group show in New York City, at Lyons Wier Gallery in Chelsea. That went really well, I have

a piece up right now in their back gallery, so you can look out for that. I have a solo show this November at General Hardware Contemporary, and I'm working really hard to finish it up.

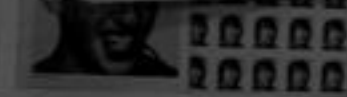
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[www.alexwierk.com](http://www.alexwierk.com)

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London's *Top 100* Bands  
**Pulp Fiction**  
1997  
1. The Verve  
2. Radiohead  
3. Blur  
4. The Chemical Brothers  
5. The Prodigy  
6. The Smashing Pumpkins  
7. The White Stripes  
8. The Libertines  
9. The Streets  
10. The Kooks  
11. The Doves  
12. The Futureheads  
13. The Horrors  
14. The Rapture  
15. The New Pornographers  
16. The Dears  
17. The Pains of Young Love  
18. The Bravery  
19. The Kooks  
20. The Doves  
21. The Futureheads  
22. The Horrors  
23. The Rapture  
24. The New Pornographers  
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96. The New Pornographers  
97. The Dears  
98. The Pains of Young Love  
99. The Bravery  
100. The Kooks









# JNASTY

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## DIE BY THE CAN

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WHEN WE FIRST FOUND OUT ABOUT JNASTY, HE INSTANTLY BECAME A NEW FAVOURITE OF OURS. THERE'S NOT A SINGLE THING YOU CAN SHOW THIS GUY WITH A CAN HE DOESN'T ALREADY KNOW. HE CRUSHES WALLS, TRAINS, THROW-UPS, TAGS AND CHARACTERS. YOU NAME IT, HE'S GOT IT ON LOCK. WE'RE THRILLED TO GET HIM ON BOARD AND BLESS THIS ISSUE.







**Bizarre Beyond Belief: Can you describe the first time you went painting?**

JNASTY: It was a really toy experience, hahaha. I painted an “R4K” which was my first crew with some kids from my neighbourhood . It stood for “Represent 4 your Krew.”

Hahahaha. Ya, so if you can picture it, it was an R4K-gold fill, red outline , in a semi-circle that was supposed to look like earth from outer space in blue and green. And underneath the R4K it said “Worldwide” hahahaha. R4K Worldwide baby! Anyways - it was wack.

**BBB: What is the most fucked-up thing you’ve seen out on a mission?**

JNASTY: I don’t really bomb that much these days but, nothing to crazy haha. I mean, when you’re out at 3-4 in the morning you’re bound to see a good ol’ hooker fight or







something. Maybe some junky shit. And some drunk people doing fucked up shit. Nothing out of the norm though.

**BBB: What's the stupidest thing you've done while out bombing?**

JNASTY: Probably tag a cop

car. That's a good way to put the heat on you haha.

**BBB: As a writer who paints in all areas of the graffiti field, such as bombing, pieces, freights, is there a particular surface you enjoy above all others?**

JNASTY: Lately I've been

enjoying the steel more than ever. I like the ridges. And bombing? I haven't bombed hard in years. I mean, I'll catch tags and a couple fills in some spots, but I wouldn't consider that bombing. The risk is a lot greater than the reward for me these days, so I stick mainly to piecing walls and painting



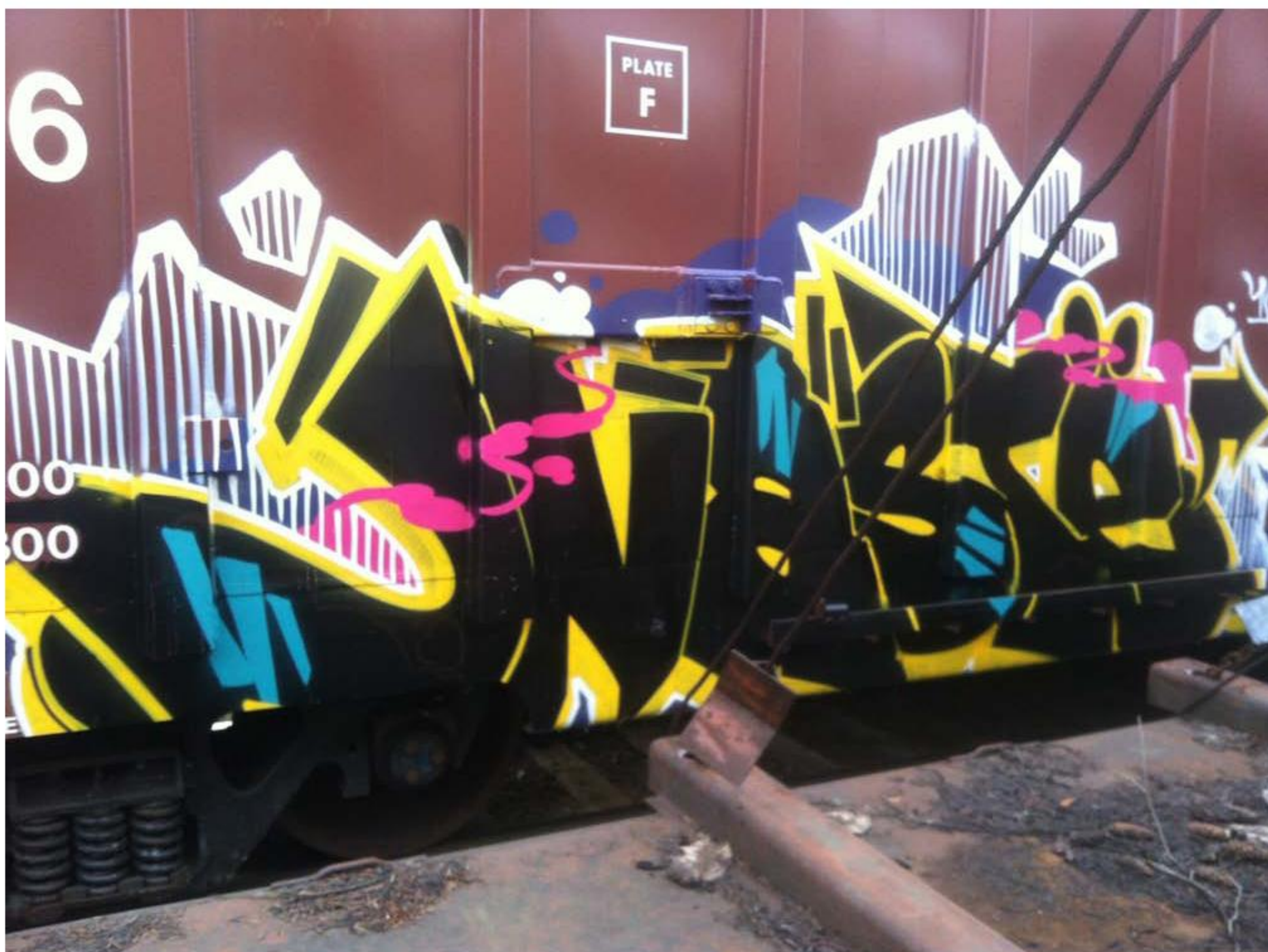












freights. And as for a surface? Like everyone else I like steel or brick of course.

**BBB: As we know graffiti artists do a lot of traveling to practice their craft, do you have a favorite city to paint in?**

JNASTY: I haven't had the privilege of painting in too many cities. But one thing I do know is Vancouver on a

hot summers day has some of the sickest walls to paint in the world.... I think? Haha. You've gotta go and find them, but there's some secret spots in the mountains and on the beaches that are really tight.

**BBB: We know you have a child, how has this person affected your life?**

JNASTY: In every way

possible. It's a feeling that can't be described. Have one....you'll know what I mean haha.

**BBB: Is it more difficult to juggle graffiti and life considering you're a family man?**

JNASTY: Yeah graffiti is definitely not my number 1 priority anymore. Free time isn't what it used to be, so







“

I MEAN, WHEN YOU'RE OUT AT 3-4 IN THE MORNING  
YOU'RE BOUND TO SEE A GOOD OL' HOOKER FIGHT

”





when I do get some, I go hard haha. I'm a single father and I get 2 nights off a week. So in that 48 hrs it's like a "graffiti frenzy". Weather permitting I'll try and paint like 3-4 panels and a wall too.

**BBB: What do you feel graffiti has given you as both a person and an artist that nothing else**

**may offer someone?**

JNASTY: The ability to lead the life of a double 00 agent haha #Dadlife

**BBB: There's many years left in the 2010s, where do you see yourself at the end of this decade?**

JNASTY: With a grown kid that wants to paint graffiti with his old man.

**BBB: Any final words for readers and fans?**

JNASTY: Die By The Can Baby! And never....ever! Trust a Mexican restaurant with Chinese cooks haha.







NORFOLK  
SOUTHERN

160567







# MARC GOODERHAM

WHEN WE FIRST GOT IN CONTACT WITH MR. GOODERHAM, HE SENT US OVER A LINK TO HIS WORK AND WE WERE JUST BLOWN AWAY. WE KNEW AS WE WERE CLICKING THROUGH HIS SITE WE WANTED TO INTERVIEW THIS GUY. HIS HIGHLY URBAN INFLUENCED PAINTINGS ARE RENDERED INCREDIBLY AND AFTER CHATTING WITH HIM, HE'S EXTREMELY INSIGHTFUL AND WISE.







**Bizarre Beyond Belief: Was creating art and painting a major passion since you were a young boy?**

Marc Gooderham: Yes, it has been. I was always drawing and painting, things around the house, setting up still life's, portraits, anything really. I'd would sit for hours drawing intricate buildings in pen and ink, lots of cross hatching and shading. I guess that's where the detail in the paintings grew from. At school I did feel that drawing and painting was the 'thing' I could do, so It's always been close to me in that

sense. Even when growing up and other interests came in to my life, art was always there.

**BBB: You studied at Amersham and the University of Westminster, do you feel as that these experiences were an integral factor in your career?**

MG: I wouldn't say they've been an integral factor to where I am at this moment in time as I didn't go from art school straight into a career as such. I did learn valuable skills and techniques which are still with me and that I apply in my

work today. But I actually left painting for quite a few years to play the drums in a band.

**BBB: Would you say that art institutions should be pushed on young artists or it is a step that can be done without?**

MG: No, I don't think it should be pushed on young artists at all. You can be self taught or even have that raw talent to make it work and happen for you. I honestly think it's how badly you want something. But, at the same time art school can be important in developing artists. You're



taught the fundamental skills, and it's an opportunity to mix with like minded people and share ideas. There's also a certain competitiveness which is not a bad thing either. I guess ultimately it's your imagination that's important and doing what you want to do, having the freedom of creating something that's come from the heart.

**BBB: What, if any, were the major differences between the institutions?**

MG: For me personally, the differences were the courses. I did a Foundation Course at Amersham where the nature of this was to experiment and explore different areas of Art

and Design. This was a good way of deciding where you want to go with your art. For me, it was Illustration at The University Of Westminster.

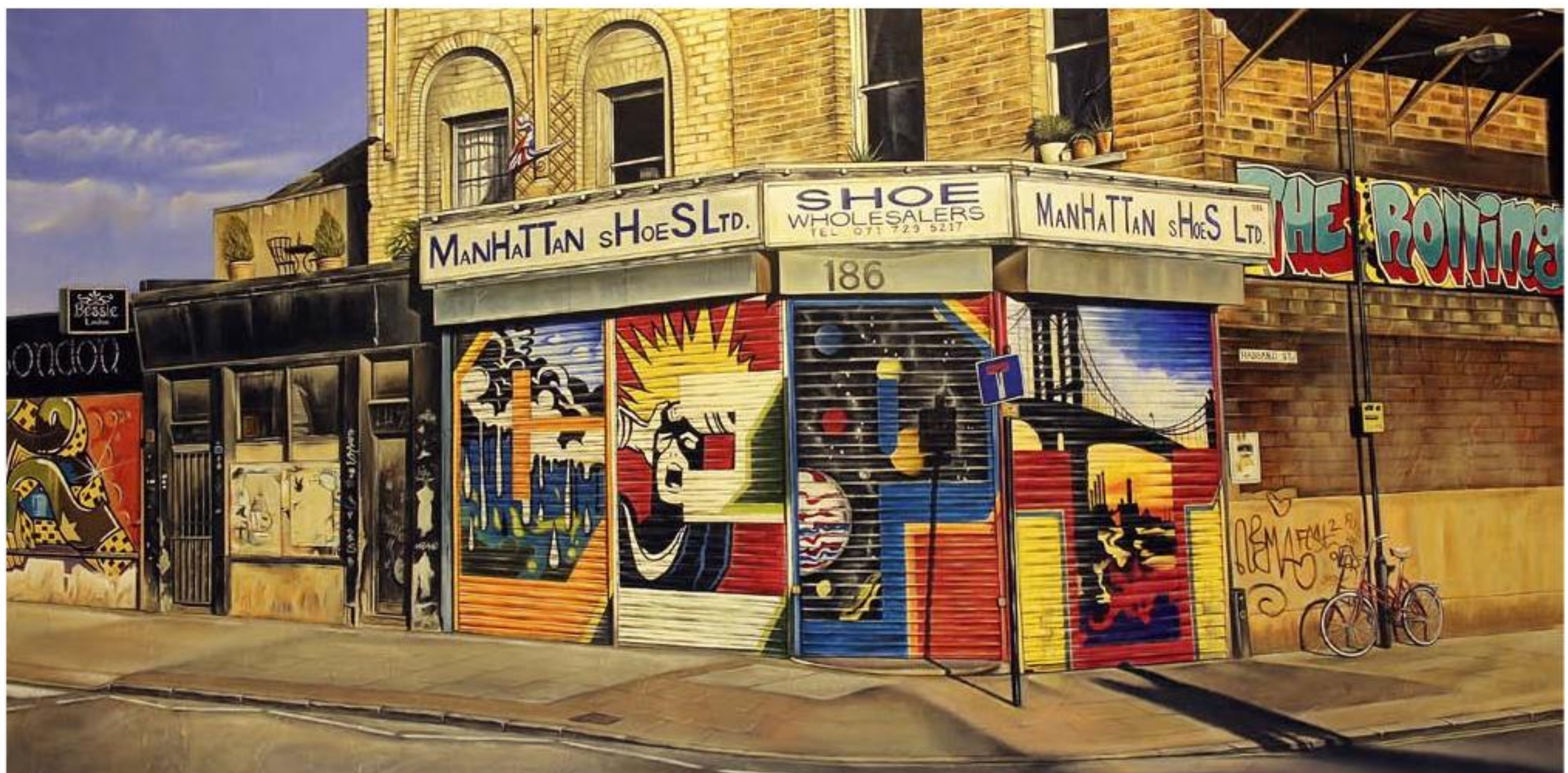
**BBB: Would you say that there's a certain methodology that all institutions indoctrinate in their students?**

MG: In my experience I felt the tutors main priority was the development of the students. By that I mean taking the time to find out your strengths and encouraging you to work towards a style and identity of your own. It did feel like we had complete freedom when it came to our work. I would imagine this is still probably a strong part of any

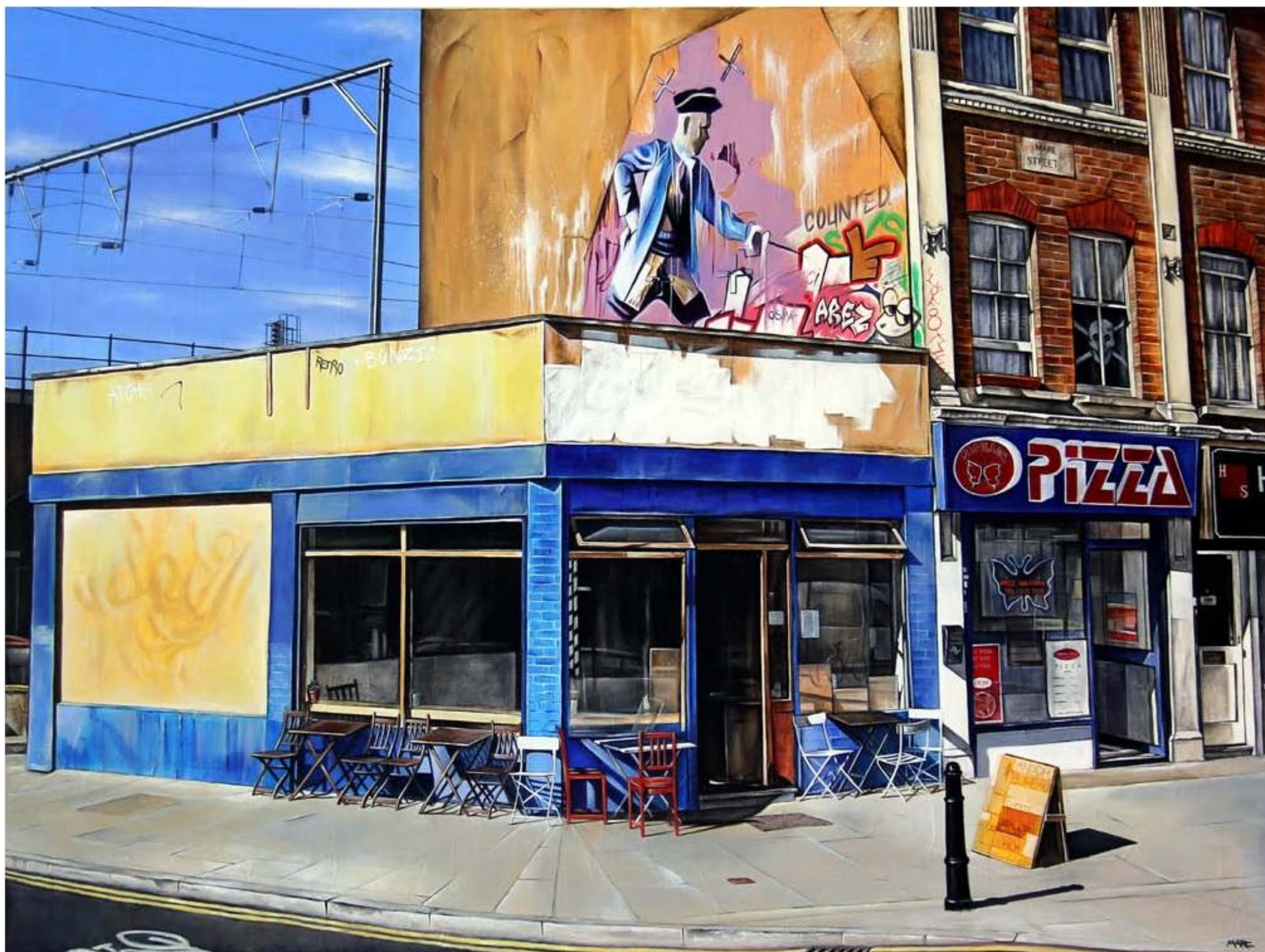
art course these days.

**BBB: You have always lived and worked in London, what is it about London that has captivated you to the point to never venture out and live in New York?**

MG: It's strange you mention New York City as It's always been a dream of mine to live there someday, even just for a few years. Whether that will happen, who knows. I did spend a big part of my twenties visiting New York, pretty much every year in fact. It turned into quite an obsession, if an expensive one. New York became an important place to me and still is. London and New York







have very similar qualities. Both are exciting, eclectic and inspiring cities. However, London is my home, I grew up here and after all of those amazing trips (and a few days of sorrow on returning home) it doesn't take long to get back to London Life. And once back, you realise why this is the greatest city. I guess it's familiarity; the streets, the people, the pubs, art, music, I could go on and on. It's a city I know so well and

from that there's a sense of feeling in control. I find the architecture here in London really interesting, rich in both history and character, there's a real romanticism about those fallen, crumbling exteriors. These grand old buildings resonate a certain sadness that I love.

**BBB: How would you say the London scene compares to that of other major cities like New York, Los Angeles or Paris?**

MG: Well, I haven't been to Los Angeles, so it would be difficult for me to say. Paris is another amazing city. But I think we have a great art scene here in London at the moment. I know the New York art scene was pretty explosive in the seventies but the scenes here and in New York, San Francisco and Paris seem to be quite similar to me. It does feel like there's a sense of Freedom in London. You can do your own thing













regardless of time and money (to a certain extent anyway). Artists in London just seem to get things done, especially when it comes to putting on art shows. For me, East London is still the at the heart of it, from Whitechapel to Kingsland Road. But I guess you just know what's on your doorstep and in London there are some amazing exhibitions every night of the week. You just have to hunt them down.

**BBB: What is it about the cityscape that fascinates you the most?**

MG: Firstly, the city is a place of intrigue. It can be full of surprises. You can turn a corner and always discover something new. It can change it's face, sometimes overnight. I love the freedom of the city, getting lost in the crowds. It can be claustrophobic yet there's the feeling of loneliness

and isolation. Just your thoughts and memories. It's these feelings that allow you to create your own world within the city. The atmosphere of the city can change according to weather, season and the time of day which makes it the perfect subject to paint. It can be the drama of the sunlight hitting a window, wall or alleyway. Or the glow of a street lamp or chimney tops against an unsettling sky.



They can be overwhelming, overpowering places. You can take as much or as little from the city as you like. Each day brings something new to look at which is the real beauty of the city.

**BBB:** Your work has moved from various urban landscapes of buildings and houses to that of alleys, murals and

**vandalized storefronts, what led you to incorporating graffiti art in your paintings?**

MG: I've always had great admiration for graffiti artists and writers. It goes back to my early obsession with New York City I think, when Graffiti Art decorated the walls and subway trains, in early Hip Hop and 70's films.

I guess I've always associated it with city life. Living in East London, I started to notice more and more walls being painted, the work was getting bigger and seemed to have more of a prescience too. You could walk past an amazing piece of artwork and by the next day, another beautiful piece would've replaced it. The streets I





was walking in in search of my next painting naturally started to incorporate these artworks. They added a different aspect to the finished paintings. Colour, identity and a new boldness began to appear. I always liked the idea (or at least hoped) that a Graffiti artist may appreciate their work featuring in a painting somewhere along the line. What I've discovered is that just as some of these deteriorating buildings are in danger of disappearing the exact same thing is happening to the art on the walls.

**BBB: Can you describe your approach to creating a painting from conceptualization to completion?**

MG: The initial stage is on foot. Walking the streets with sketch book and camera, in search of that discovery. I may turn a corner and almost see the finished painting staring back at me or an idea may come from a section or close

up of an area I've already passed by. Once decided on the scene I'll make various sketches at different times of the day until I arrive at a composition I'm happy with. Everything is taken into consideration, from a street sign on a wall to a reflection upon a wet pavement. Even the smallest detail is relevant and just as important to creating the final painting. Once I've drawn in the image, I then start to paint and build up the layers. Although the paintings are very detailed the creative process can take it's own journey. It can become slightly abstract at times. For example, working on a window full of reflections start to become just shapes of different tones and colours.

**BBB: If you were to do a solo show with your top 5 favourite paintings included in the show, which would they be?**

MG: 1-Late Afternoon, Spitalfields.  
2-Wild And Free

3-Blue Above The Wires  
4-In The Neighbourhood  
5-Corner Of The Street

**BBB: What's next on the docket for Marc Gooderham, from this year and beyond?**

MG: I'm looking forward to the year ahead and of course where things may lead to in the future. The work sold really well last year so I certainly want to keep that momentum going. The canvases are getting bigger now and there's lots of ideas for new paintings. But I guess the big thing this year will be an exhibition. I'll be working closely with the gallery in preparation for a London show with a collection of Limited Edition Prints and new Original paintings. As I said earlier, the city is such an interesting place to paint and I had always set out to paint an alternative view of London. So, I'll continue to walk the streets in search of the next building or street corner that deserves to be painted.

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[www.marcgooderham.co.uk](http://www.marcgooderham.co.uk)

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“ I MAY TURN A CORNER AND ALMOST SEE THE  
FINISHED PAINTING STARING BACK AT ME ”















# John Reuss

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JOHN REUSS IS ONE OF THOSE ARTIST'S THAT CAPTIVATES THE VIEWER IMMEDIATELY. HIS UNIQUE AND INNOVATIVE AESTHETIC IS EXTREMELY PAINTERLY AND DETAILED. THE BEAUTY OF REUSS' WORK CAN LEAVE YOU BREATHLESS AND HAVE YOUR EYES WANDERING THROUGH HIS WORK ALL DAY.





**Bizarre Beyond Belief: The primary content of your paintings are portraiture and figure, why in particular is this the focus of your work?**

John Reuss: I am very interested in the human condition, in our psychology and how we relate to the world we live in, the definition of "self" contra the surrounding world, our bodily integrity and mortality - so it is only natural that some sort of representation of the individual becomes the focus of my work I think.

**BBB: Your work is said you not be a physical location, why is it important for you to**

**disconnect reality from the subconscious?**

JR: It's not that I think it is important to disconnect the two - it's more like I see the two as one. What if what goes on inside us and how we act on that IS reality. I question if the way we perceive the world is nothing but a product of what we are - beings that are physically immersed in the world, build to perceive it in a certain way, slaves to our biology. I mean, is there actually a world out there that we in any way can perceive with 100% objectivity? My work is not about providing answers, it's more of an investigation and

about me asking questions and my basic existential doubts. I'm interested in recreating emotions, situations, that resonate with the viewer. I try to make work where I give enough of me and enough meaning to set a scenario or a "feel" - but with enough openness for everyone else to interpret, to be affected by it, to make their own stories, to feel it.....

**BBB: Because your work is "an inner world, a world where thought, emotion and raw cognition" are these works developed in your mind during a meditative or dormant state?**

JR: Yes and no - I like to



meditate (as part of a yoga practice) and there is no doubt that this brings up a whole array of strange ideas and images to get inspired from. I have also gotten loads of inspiration from dreams and especially from that moment when you wake up, but you are not completely in touch with your body yet.

But my work is just as much a product of a process where the actual working on the painting is just as important. I don't ever get "finished" ideas in my head that I then reproduce in paint. I get images, ideas, emotions - and

painting is my way of dealing with those. The final product is a result of how I interact with the images I come up with during the process of working on the painting.

**BBB: On that note, can you describe the creation of a canvas from conception to completion?**

JR: The conception is pretty hard to explain, usually I feel a need to express stuff going on in my head that can be triggered by lots of things. I get inspired by words (books, song lyrics, daily conversation),

watching people interact, my own inner life, movies, etc. The conception is not me seeing a finished image in my mind - it is more of a need to express myself, to get something off my chest I guess. I work without sketches directly on the canvas (but I often use smaller works on paper as "idea factory") - or you might say the sketching process has become part of the final work as I start out with pretty natural sketching of one or more persons directly on the canvas with coal or pencils and I will continue that sketching











throughout the work in between layers of paint. For me a lot of the inspiration comes from the work itself as I keep on adding layers, removing and adding body

parts or facial features. I see as sort of an exploration and a dialogue. What I am aiming for is a balance between well thought out details and "happy accidents" - I really

love it when I sort of get lost in my own work, not knowing what layers the details I work on belong to and where I just let the work talk to me and I respond without a lot



of conscious thought. This is also where the layers start to merge and completely new figures emerge.

During the process I also work with the colors - a work can completely change palette several times during the process. I will often destroy or paint over details or even the complete canvas - it has been instrumental in my development to teach myself not to hold on to anything in a painting, anything can be changed or removed. I will often put the canvas aside for some time during the process - and I also often revisit works that I have exhibited as "finished" - sometimes years later. In my process I use various drawing tools (pencil, charcoal, crayons), paintbrushes and various spray guns. I like to alternate between very controlled work with attention to detail and more loose work where I maybe throw on paint, let it drip and run etc. At some point I feel content with what I see - I will usually then add some finer details, highlights and clean up the background a bit - and the work is finished.... at least until I decide it wasn't! The only work really safe from change or destruction is the work that is sold.

**BBB: Does this process remain the same when attacking paper?**

JR: No. Making small works on paper is actually a bit of a struggle for me but I like the challenge. I've had to adjust my technique and work in a more strict and graphic manner - and watch the layerings as too much processing destroys the paper completely. I also incorporate more stencils / airbrushing here and experiment with various mediums - I've recently begun some experiments with collage and including various odd materials.

**BBB: Your more recent works colour palette tend to be softer than the bright reds and blues of previous series', is there any particular reason for the shift?**

JR: The use of electric blue and red hues were actually a direct result of my first encounters with meditation and experiments with my mind. Things can get pretty weird and I actually got a bit frightened the first time I succeeded in reaching that particular state of mind where you just let everything run it's course, come what may.

In general my palette has softened a lot over the years - it's not something I've planned as such, it's part of the development I guess. I do plan my palette in certain ways though. I like to use a lot of muted tones, grays and "dirty" colors juxtaposed with more bright colors and black here and there. I think in general I really like to have opposites in my work on several levels, colors being one. For me the contrast gives tension, makes your eyes "dance" and provokes thought.

**BBB: Your background came from graphic design and computer science, what and when was the pivotal moment in which you changed fields?**

JR: I have always been creative and have used painting and drawing as an outlet and a way to express myself since I was a kid. I think the real turning point for me was in 2009. I had more or less given up on the art thing but I found I just could not let it rest and began doing some work just for my own pleasure. Then I read about this juried exhibition not too far from where I live and I thought I'd give it one last go. I made 3 works specifically for this







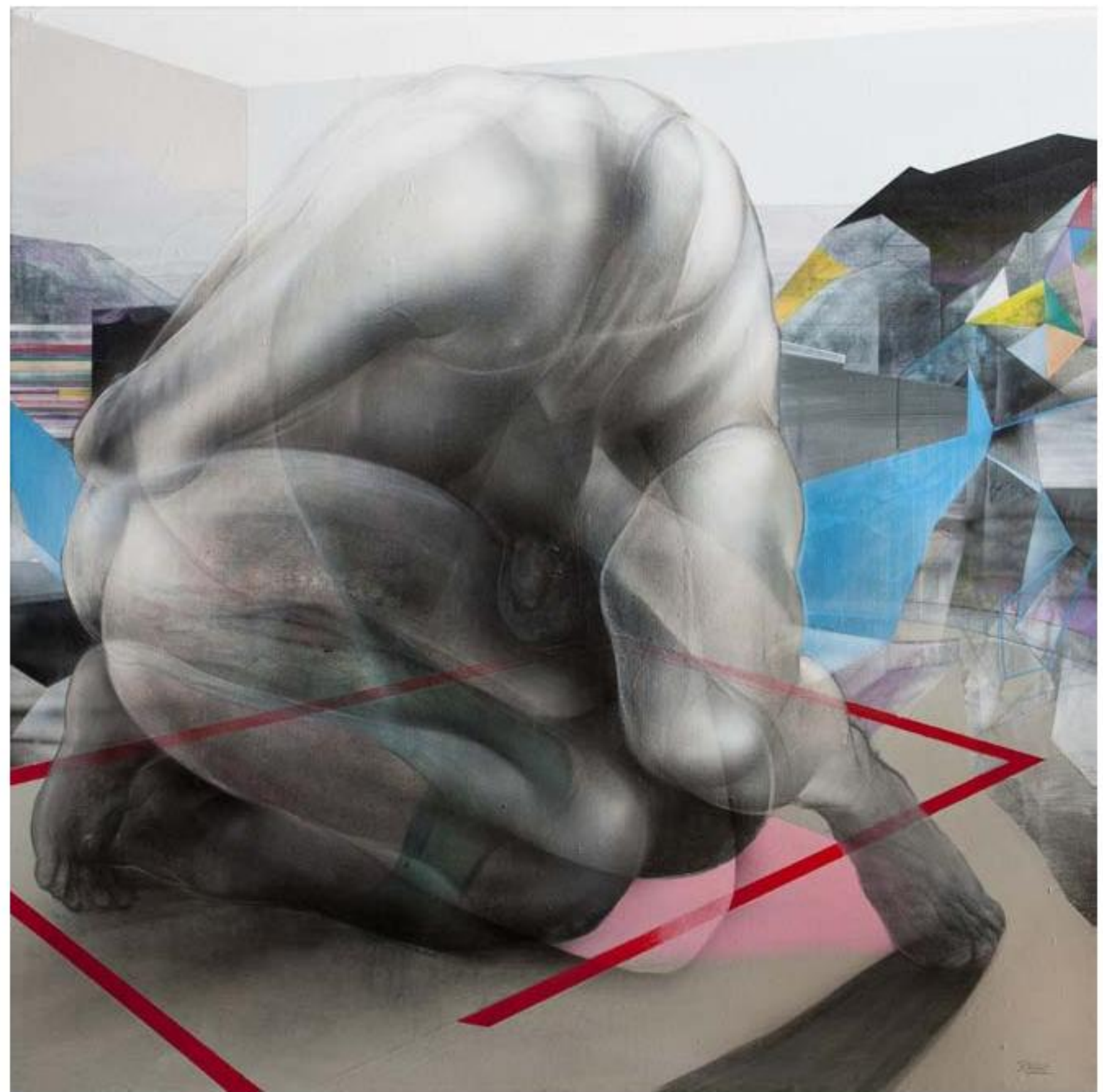




show, they all got accepted and I won the juries first price. That landed me gallery deal - they actually offered me a full on solo up front and things started to happen for me. The following year I got accepted into another juried show - one of the important ones here in Denmark and I began to feel that this could actually work - that someone out there understood my work and appreciated it. As far as the graphic design and computer science, I think it does have some sort of influence on the way my work turns out. At least the graphic part anyway. There are lots of principles from design that you can use in your creative process and I think it also shows in the more geometric shapes and use of blocks of color, etc.

Computer science not so much - but part of my study involved philosophy of science, which got me started on the whole philosophic interested and led me on to the fascination with Phenomenology in particular which has been a great source of inspiration for me.

**BBB: Do you think these fields have helped or hindered your painting process?**



JR: I don't know if I'd say helped - but they are part of what I did in life so far, so they become a part of the inspiration and tools I use in the painting process. Maybe the theoretical aspects of both fields and my general habit of over-thinking stuff could be seen as a hinderance - actually that is something I work on very consciously, to get past the thinking and act more on intuition. That struggle sort of influences the way my work turns out - there's often a clash between clean shapes and

lines against more "messy" and expressionistic areas - or spots where I've tried to let some of the initial layers stay without over-painting or over-thinking it.

**BBB: And because you're a self-taught artist, would you say that receiving artistic guidance at an educational level is unnecessary?**

JR: I don't think it is unnecessary as such - but I am not sure it is for everyone. The fact that the Art



Academies spurt out lots and lots of people with a 5 year degree and only a fraction of those ever end up remotely associated with the art world kind of tells me that it's not always the golden key to success for an artist. If you think about it lots of great artists never set foot in art school what so ever. That being said having a degree does give you a certain

knowledge and it does open certain doors for you, at least here in Denmark. As a self taught artist you often have to work a bit harder to prove yourself and earn the respect up front. But in my experience, if your work is great and you can work like a pro, a degree is really not that important. I did kind of do my own studies into the more technical stuff at a young age. I

read tons of books on drawing technique, oil and acrylic paint technique and all those things. I also experimented with just about any -ism out there. And experimentation and trying out various techniques is still part of my work today - I'm still developing.

**BBB: Being born in Germany and with cities like Berlin having a huge artistic**







“AS A SELF TAUGHT ARTIST YOU OFTEN HAVE TO WORK A BIT HARDER TO PROVE YOURSELF AND EARN THE RESPECT UP FRONT.”

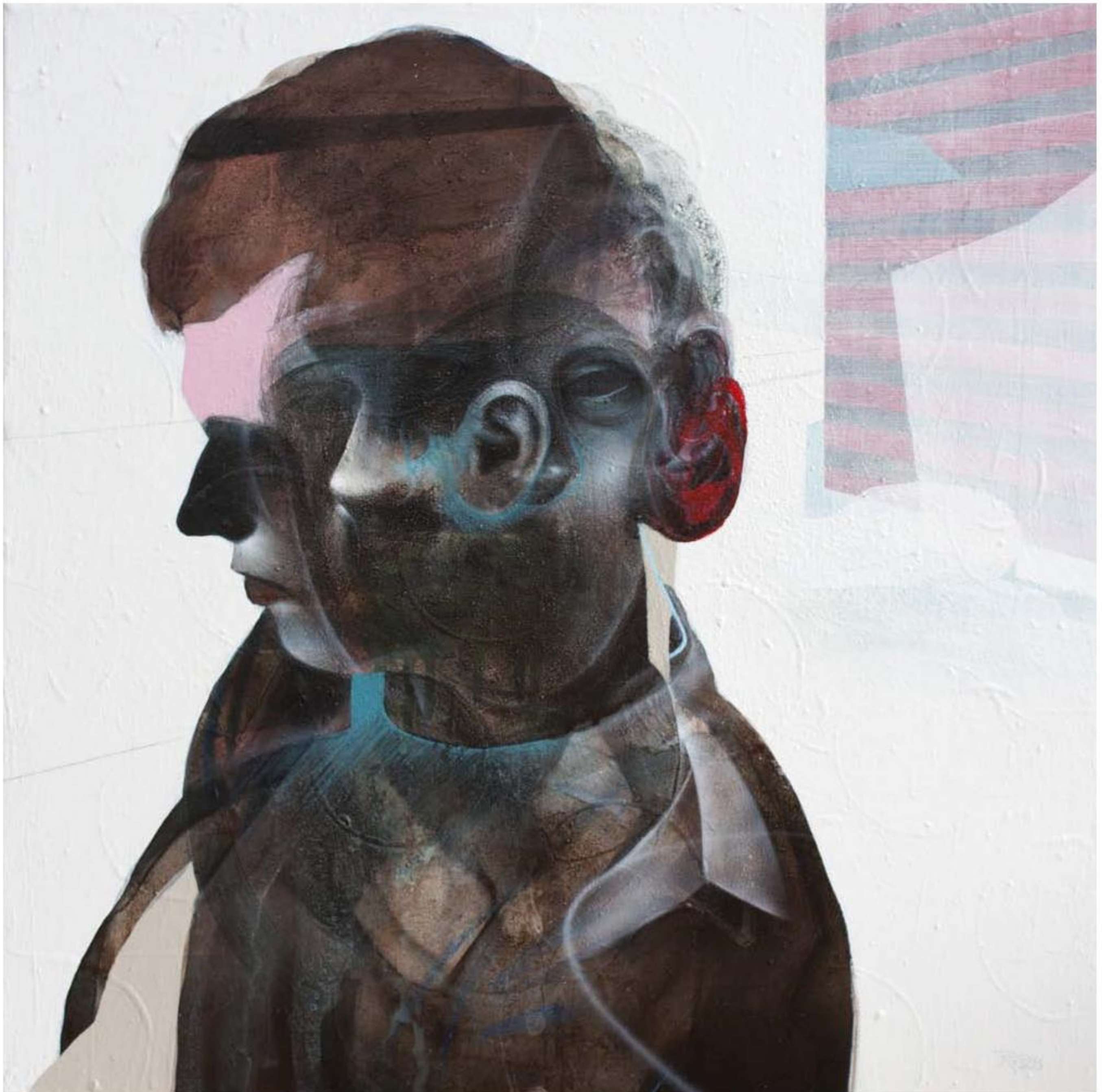


**community, what move to  
Denmark?**

JR: Well I didn't have much  
of a saying in that matter  
- my parents brought me

to Denmark when I was 3  
years old. I still hold German  
citizenship, visit often and  
have family there. And I love  
Berlin! I'm just not sure I'm  
fit for big city living - these

days I live kind of in an rural  
area where there are not too  
many people around. I'm not  
really a people person and  
although I love the anonymity  
of disappearing in a crowd,





too many people in one space makes me uneasy (exhibition openings are “fun”)

I love visiting Berlin and other big cities for a limited time - and then go home where it's quiet and lonely. The only thing I miss from bigger cities is the feeling of community you can have with other artists, hang out and get inspired, exchange ideas etc. I think creative people can often benefit from those relations - it's sort of and symbiotic relationship.

**BBB: If you were to tell the readers to watch one documentary, read one book and research one artist, what**

**would they be?**

JR: Oh. Choosing just one artist is going to be tough - there are so many I admire! I'll go by my latest fascination then and that is the work of Belgian sculptural artist Berlinde de Bruyckere - I love her work and what it does to you as a viewer.

As for books I really like things that spark my imagination.

A great (semi)fictional work I read recently was *The Dream Faculty* by Sara Stridsberg. It's a novel that mixes documentary material with free fiction, the narrative revolving around Valeri Solanas - the woman who

shot Andy Warhol and wrote the ultra-feminist manifesto SCUM. If you like complicated timelines and jumps in the narrative structure, feverish prose, historical facts on (pop) culture in America mixed with fictional conversations with a dead person.... this ones for you! I'm going to go with an oldie as far as documentary - if you never watched the South Bank Show's interview with Francis Bacon from 1980-something you should. Even if you are not familiar with his work or maybe not too fond of it, this documentary is equally hilarious, entertaining and instructive.







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[www.johnreuss.com](http://www.johnreuss.com)





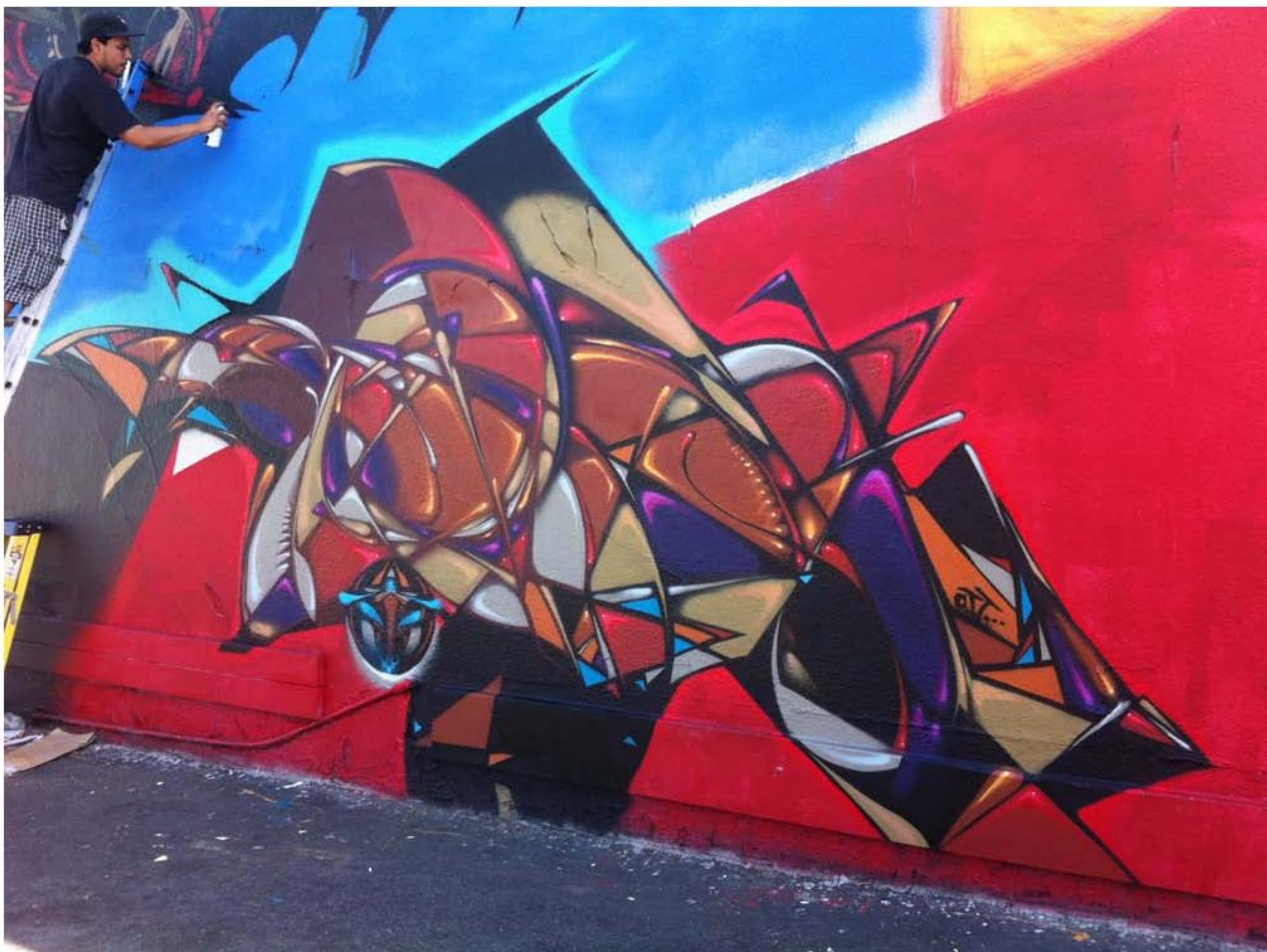
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# CODAK

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THERE'S SO MUCH TO BE SAID ABOUT CODAK. HE'S EASILY ONE OF THE MOST INSPIRING GRAFFITI ARTISTS WE KNOW. CODAK'S NOT CORRUPTED BY THE TRADITIONAL IDEA OF GRAFFITI LETTERFORMS AND STYLES, CODAK BREAKS BARRIERS ON HIS APPROACH TO HIS PRACTICE AND HAS A TON OF INCREDIBLE INSIGHT ON THE ARTS COMMUNITY.





**Bizarre Beyond Belief: First off, are Adam Smith and Codak the same person? If not, can you describe their individual entities?**

CODAK: They are two shades of the same persona. One cannot exist without the other, and somehow they have found a way to coexist in a wonderful love / hate relationship.

**BBB: Your roots come from**

**all over the United States, why remain in Los Angeles as opposed to a number of the cities of your lineage?**

CODAK: It's all just part of life's journey. I've learned great lessons in every place I have lived so far and Los Angeles has given me a lot of food for thought and experiences. I don't know the next step for me exactly, I just try to keep myself open to learn as much

as possible and when the time is right I'll move on to the next stage.

**BBB: You say you received "misinformation and miseducation" in Portland. Can you describe your stint at your educational institution?**

CODAK: That statement is more commentary on the lack of quality education for all Americans. We are force fed



a one dimensional education in most states and not taught to respect and learn from the world around us. That being said Portland does have one of the best public school systems in the states and I do consider myself lucky to have been educated there, as well as having a mother that has taught at the collegiate level my entire life. I guess it's more of a snarky stab at the education system and how myself and many others have been able to filter through the information taught to us and learn to think and reason

for ourselves ( which I would hope is the base reason for education anyway).

**BBB: Would you say your educational experiences were primarily negative or positive?**

CODAK: My High School experience was rather typical; Nerdy art kid rides skateboard, learns to write on walls. Feels like an outcast and finds friends of a similar nature...go figure. College on the other hand was a great experience where I was able to immerse myself in being

creative full-time, even if it was for a grade. So my experience is about half and half but the second half carried more weight than the first.

**BBB: On that note, do you feel that artistic institutions are a necessary stepping stone for artists or a bunch of hogwash?**

CODAK: I think it depends on the individual and what they want to accomplish. If you're going to Art School to learn to BECOME an artist than I think you should spend your money













IT'S AN ART MOVEMENT BUILT AROUND ACTION, ABOUT PUTTING YOURSELF OUT THERE IN HARMS WAY FOR YOUR BELIEFS. IT IS CHAOS, STRUCTURE AND EVEN SIMPLICITY WRAPPED INTO ONE.









on something else. However if your going to try and develop your talents and learn how to engage yourself creatively than I think it's great. I actually didn't go to an Art School but rather a state school, and I found just having access to the resources and materials was a great tool. Plus I had teachers that understood my artistic background and could help nourish the direction I wanted to move in, so it is also key to have great teachers to help guide you.

**BBB: How have these experiences helped your progression as an artist and designer?**

CODAK: I wouldn't be the artist / designer I am today without all these experiences. I have fallen flat on my face time and time again but these experiences teach me how to get back up and recalculate and get back at it.

**BBB: What was it in particular that captivated you with graffiti and street-art?**

CODAK: The purity of it...It's an art movement built around action, about putting yourself out there in harms way for your beliefs. It is chaos, structure and even simplicity wrapped into one. It has been the core of my life for over two decades and I can't imagine

my life without it. Obviously my relationship has changed dramatically over the years and I am no longer risking the law to put it out there, life changes and you re-prioritize to fit different needs. However that initial inspiration is what still drives me to better my work year after year...that competitive graffiti attitude, the rush.....etc.

**BBB: Did you ever believe it would lead to such a successful career?**

CODAK: I would be lying if I said that I always wanted to "Keep it real" and not be able to make a living, support a family, etc. off my art. I feel





I have made some serious strides towards being able to do that, but there is always more work to be done. I am very happy I have been able to be successful at garnering respect from my peers and the people that have inspired me along the way and continue to do so. As well being an inspiration to the younger generation coming up now means a lot to me. I feel your only really successful when you can tell you've had a positive impact on the world around you.

**BBB: You've worked with huge name's like NOKIA and Hello Kitty, what is it like working**

**with massive corporations?**

CODAK: I've actually had pretty good experience with these big companies so far. I guess I've managed to establish an aesthetic that is my own and these companies have come to me for my own look and not felt like I was sacrificing my integrity.

**BBB: Was your artistic integrity ever jeopardized?**

CODAK: Please refer to previous answer...

**BBB: If you could recommend, one album, one film and one city for the reader to listen,**

**watch and go to, what would they be?**

CODAK: Album: A Tribe Called Quest: Peoples Instinctive Travels and the Paths of Rhythm. Film: Jim Hensons: Dark Crystal. City: Portlandia.

**BBB: With 2013 just beginning, what can the readers expect from Adam Smith/Codak?**

CODAK: Just a lot more of the same....me sitting around racking my brain, giving myself more gray hairs trying to figure out how to just keep moving forward....Like I'm already doing...hah!

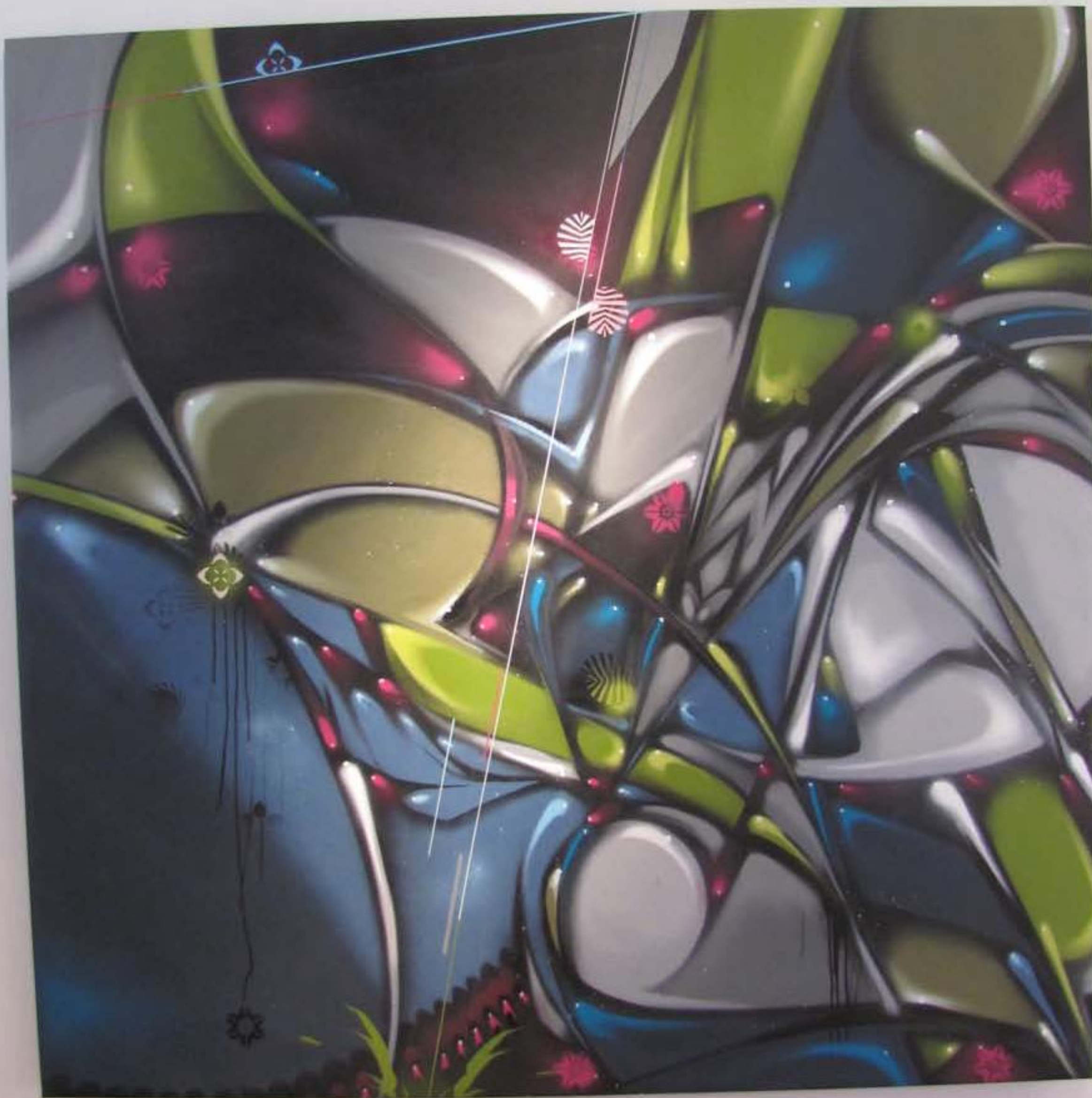
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# Ruben Pang

NOW TALK ABOUT A VISUAL EXPLOSION. RUBEN'S WORK IS STRIKING AND EERIE AT THE SAME TIME. BEAUTIFUL LAYERS AND LAYERS OF SOFT COLOURS, JUXTAPOSED PERFECTLY ON DARK BACKGROUNDS. RUBEN PANG'S WORK NOT ONLY INSPIRES BUT DAZZLES THE VIEWER.



**Bizarre Beyond Belief:**  
**Your work is unbelievably innovative and in a way, very abstract. How would you describe your work to a blind person?**

Ruben Pang: We could describe a painting through its materiality and symbolic properties. The painting is essentially module (pigment) within vehicle (solvent and oil). The variety of pigments embody a various essence. Carmine Red from crushed Cochineal bugs; Indian Yellow from cow urine; and Black Asphaltum from ground up Egyptian mummies were all pigments of sacrifice. Volatile pigments like Cobalt, Lead and Emerald Green represented the thrill of synthesis and distillation—a search for purity in both the medium and the surface. Today's staples, Phthalocyanines, Quinacridones and Perylenes are luminous colors, reflecting the fluorescence of our times. The vehicle medium which carries the pigment comes in a variety of viscosities. In a sense, this is the glue between thought and process. Linseed Stand Oil feels like liquid amber, concealing traces of movement; Alkyd Resin slides around like gelatin, drying

quickly without luster and Oil of Spike Lavender is the only solvent which encourages restraint (maybe its the scent). When mapping the painting in the mind's eye, the physicality of painting (texture, tactility, size) is not so important. Instead, the layers and combinations of pigment and medium are signals of impulse, nostalgia and even irony. We create fiction to focus on describing the painting verbally. As a painter, my self consciousness, uncertainty and a mistrust of absolutes means that I fumble with allegory, humor and drama to express promises. The titles are how I always begin these descriptions; they say what I can say with most conviction—to the blind and the seeing alike: (I had) Breakfast with Ectoplasm, and You're so Special I Ignore You. After all, the irony is that the gift of sight in today's saturated environment means that we are inclined to read images like braille anyway.

**BBB: Being an artist from Singapore, how do you feel this has contributed to your artistic practice?**

RP: This place makes you hypersensitive—constantly

agitated. Especially when plugged in to a large city, one needs a vessel that provides solace—a place to nourish art with art, be it the remnants of your own failed paintings, stills from torrented movies, or the works of your heroes, sourced from the net. The excess of information and the resulting lethargy of appropriation is hard to deal with, everything is fertile, but everything is some kind of shit as well, you can't live without it so the only way is to process it. In his book *What Painting Is*, James Elkins uses the alchemist's circulation vessel as a metaphor for creative regeneration. "The alchemists called such vessels pelicans, since that bird was supposed to nourish its young by pecking at its own breast and letting the blood spurt into the open mouths of its chicks ...The only nourishment must come from the refuse of the painting itself. Nothing new enters the studio, and nothing is wasted: everything goes into the work, and comes back out again."

**BBB: There's not too many artists from Singapore that people are aware of, how would you describe the artistic community in Singapore?**





RP: Its small but growing scene, you can be familiar with the art districts within a week. I'm pretty sure everyone is already somewhat acquainted. It's a really small city. After a

while you bump into the same people on the street and at openings. When you get home, they're on your Facebook chat bar and you're reading each others' updates on the

homepage. Still people tend to find comfort zones; small groups sharing the same work environment, study together or have a similar approach in their practice. Even in such close proximity, unless you make an effort, people are going to remain familiar stranger at most.

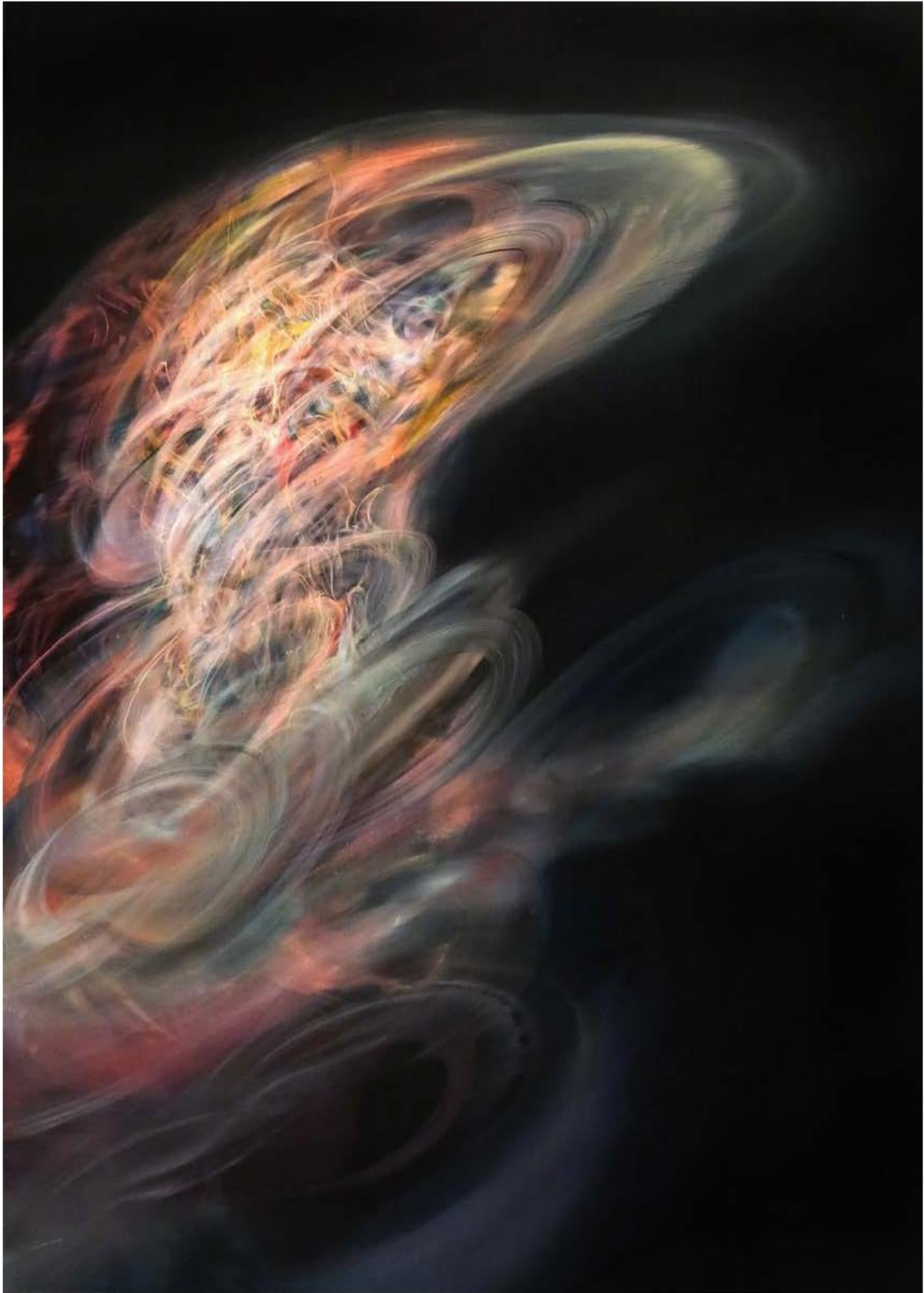
**BBB: Furthermore, how would you describe the aesthetic vision of artists in Singapore?**

RP: Artists find salvation in Singapore's lack of art history. Every movement and resurgence is a potential source of expansion. Especially for the new generation of artists, there isn't a distinct East-West divide. Romanticism, Greenbergian formalism and the Neo Rapphealites are just as accessible/acceptable as the Tao of Aesthetics and the Shurangama Sutra (Buddhist philosophies on the nature of seeing and levels of consciousness). We tend to celebrate and metabolize history as a matrix—Modern and Postmodern ideas are explored simultaneously, there isn't a passionate hatred of Social Realism (aren't they comics?) and Salvador Dali doesn't have the reputation of











being an outdated charlatan. This inquisitiveness has become ingrained since artists brought back influences from all over the world. When my dad was studying in Baharuddin Vocational Institute in the 70s (today's Temasek Design School), there were painting tutors preaching German Expressionist values and ceramic tutors influenced by Japanese Seto Ware. International artists who settled in Singapore have also accelerated the imagination of art students. Since arriving in 1981, Gilles Massot's participation in some of the earliest performance festivals, spiritual approach to photo journalism and tutelage at the Lasalle College of the Arts has captivated students with an affinity for the cerebral. He embraces eccentricity, and his love for performance is infectious, he's turned introverts into method actors. Many artists will agree that for a while, there was an unnecessary obligation to pick up either eastern or western art historical baggage. For painters Milenko Prvacki and Ian Woo, an artist's baptism in his/her chosen medium should come before taking on existential or identity crises—you're a painter first

and foremost. Students were encouraged to take the medium as the conduit between thought and process, entertain abstract metaphors

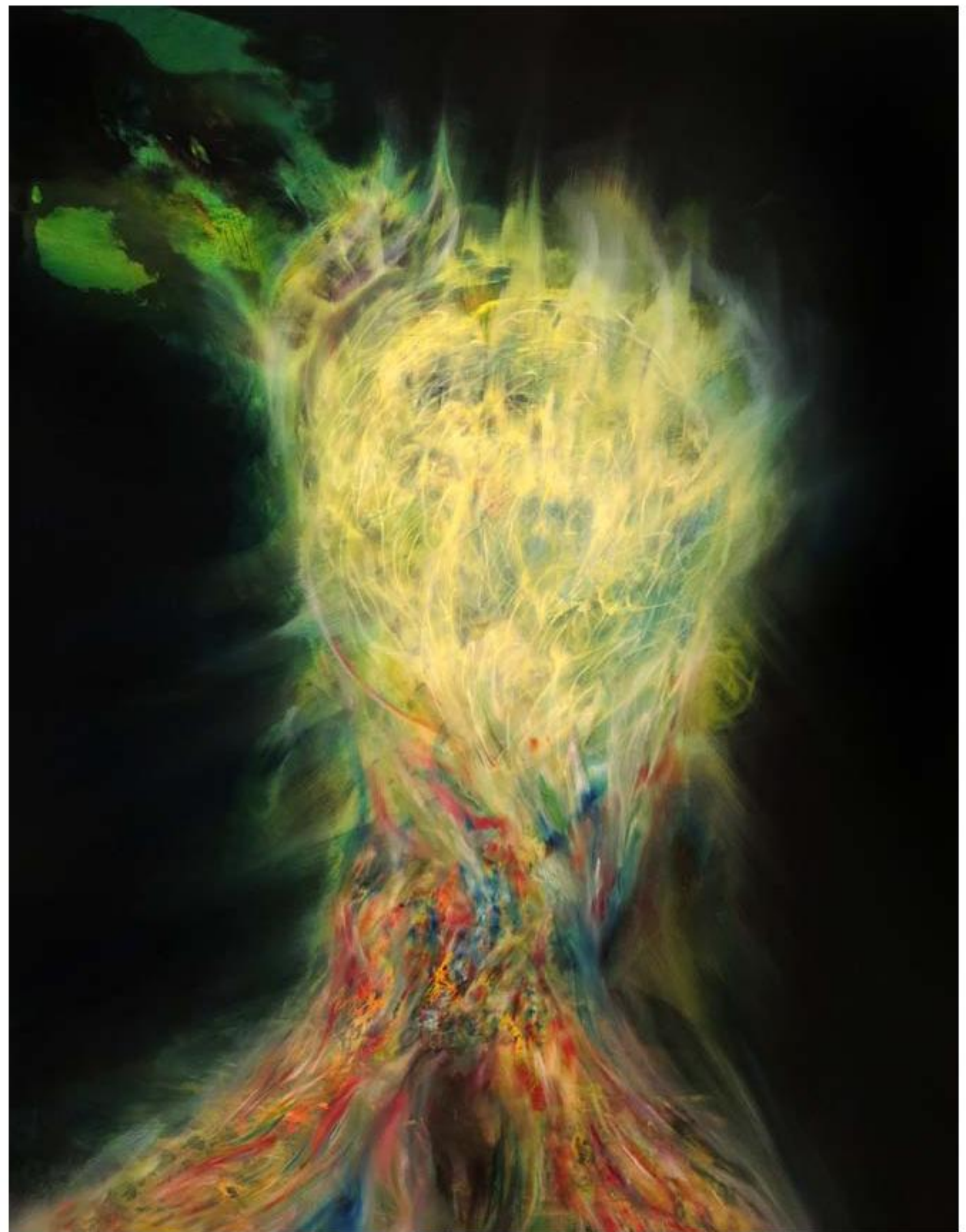
and allegories in painting, and through experience, find a sense of individuality. Two of my favorite painters who are Lasalle alumni are practicing





artists Jeremy Sharma and Jane Lee. Recently, the combination of photography, video and multimedia is explored more extensively: Robert Zhao's dexterous manipulation of photography produces alternative visions of natural history under the fictional name of the Institute of Critical Zoologists and Ho Tzu Nyen's psychedelic Cloud of Unknowing, an installation of sound, land and dream scape all at once, was selected for the 2011 Venice Biennale. I'm a struggling technophile, picking up new media slowly ... so its especially exciting to be in the company of mulch-disciplinary peers like Debbie Ding, Geraldine Kang and Zai Tang. Their adventures, circuit bending and digital documentation include The Singapore River as Psycho-geographical Faultline, Portraits of a Young Artist and Drive-An installation and performance on wheels. We're still at the beginning, and at this point of time. I think all of us find common ground in the prospects of individuality, evolution and synthesis.

**BBB: As a graduate from La Salle College of Arts, how would you describe your experiences at this institution?**



RP: Lasalle is a place to experiment, fail, fail horribly, and pick yourself back up again, all in good company. I've made some of my best friends here and met some of the most inspiring artists and lecturers.

**BBB: Your work is created by using layers upon layers of**

**paint, how would you describe your approach to a piece?**

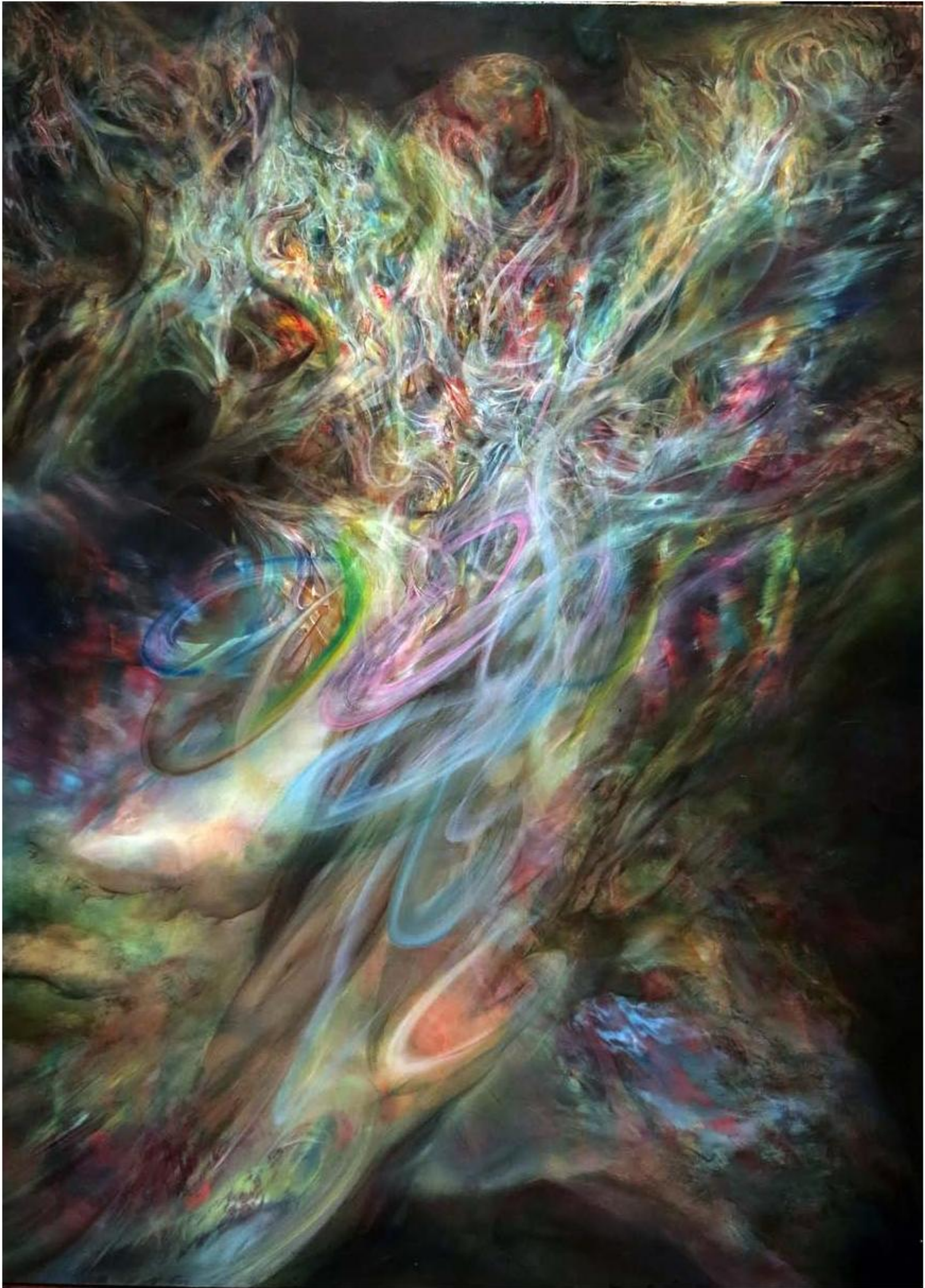
RP: I often start by laying down a solid color to break into the surface. As the layers progress, I work light and transparent paint onto a dark background because the line-work has a sense of immediacy, much like drawing.



“ I BELIEVE PAINTING IS A RECORD OF SOMETHING WHICH  
CANNOT BE ARTICULATED THROUGH OTHER MEANS. ”









Paint is put on intuitively. There's no weave to even out the brush marks, so the dynamics of paint are amplified. I like illusionistic effects and tend avoid images that give away the two-dimensionality of the surface in a predictable way. Sanding down or removing overworked layers with solvents are substitutes for the undo button. The mix of additive and subtractive layering adds a new dimension, decisions are essentially made half-blind and it's hard to predict how things will resurface. The ghost-marks and other traces that reveal themselves through reduction are more than nuances, and affect the composition's structure in unexpected ways. The painting process is always a negotiation between color and form—a lugubrious game (sorry I had to bring up that Dali painting title). The climax is when you've painted yourself into a corner and then find a way out of the mess. Timing is also important; it determines how layers react with each other. For example, in indirect painting techniques which require the layering of complementary colors, committing to a color scheme too early may narrow glazing choices, making the rest of the process feel a bit banal.

The act of creation itself determines how the painting progresses, one additive or reductive mark at a time. David Reed the abstract painter who created what has become known as “Technicolor” paintings had mentioned that oil paint is a sensitive medium; it will tell you what it wants to become. I believe painting is a record of something which cannot be articulated through other means. Adding and peeling back layers creates wormholes to go back and forth in time and memory, this process perpetuates until the decision is made to end the game, or there is nowhere else to go.

**BBB: Can you describe why you feel your choice mediums, aluminum helps you complete your pieces as opposed to other more conventional surfaces like canvas or board?**

RP: Aluminum is a very forgiving surface, it can take a lot of abuse, from brushes, solvents, rags, sandpaper, scrapers etc... On aluminum, colors come out looking colder but more intense. Painted aluminum is magic under tungsten and halogen lights as the cold surface balances out the tint and reflects light back in a different way (without a

white undercoat), it projects an image at the viewer with a screen-like consistency.

**BBB: As an artist who has exhibited in a number of galleries, can you describe your process in preparing for a show?**

RP: I choose paintings from what I already have completed, as opposed to deciding on a theme and working everything in one direction, I think the process becomes too daunting and the adventure of painting might be reduced to labor. It is easier to approach the exhibition as a well curated set of diary entries, it builds a tension between paintings that almost don't sit well next to each other.

**BBB: As a very young artist, what plans or projects do you have on the go and how do you see your artistic practice developing?**

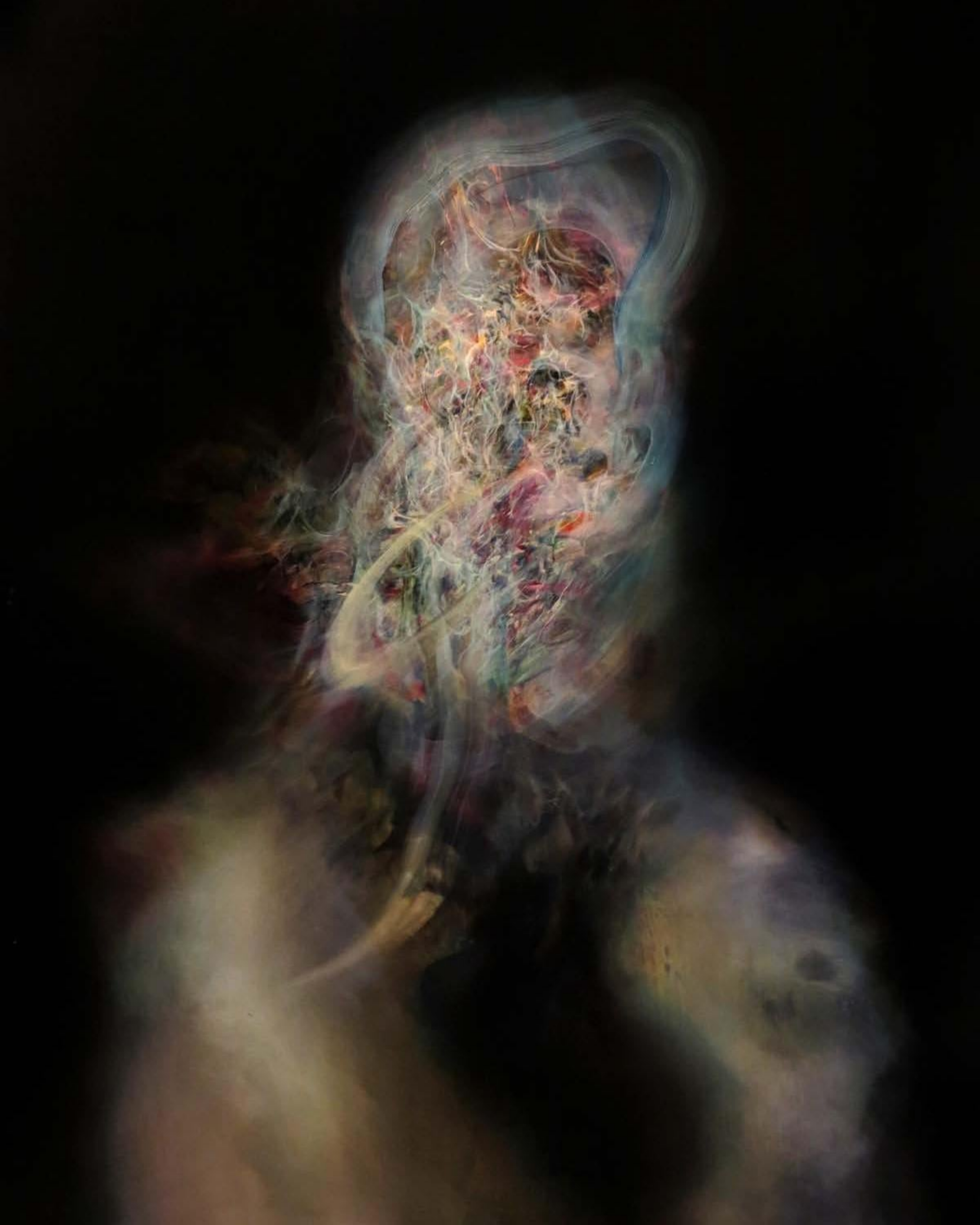
RP: I'm preparing for a solo show in Singapore this October. There a million things I want to do, going back into music production is not too far down the list. But for now, it's just one painting at a time, that's all!

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[www.rubenpang.com](http://www.rubenpang.com)

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# DOES

## [LOVE LETTERS]

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NOW THIS IS A MAN WHO NEEDS NO INTRODUCTION. IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD OF DOES OF THE LOVELETTERS CREW, YOU PROBABLY DON'T FOLLOW GRAFFITI OR EVEN LOOK AT OUR WEBSITE. THIS GUY ALL OVER THE WORLD. LITERALLY. WITH A TECHNICAL SKILL SET THAT FEW OTHER GRAFFITI ARTISTS CAN MATCH, DOES TRAVELS ALL OVER THE WORLD PAINTING AND PROMOTING HIS INFAMOUS SIGNATURE, BEAUTIFYING WALLS AND CREATES JAW-DROPPING CANVASES. THIS IS A MAN WE'RE SO HONOURED AND PRIVILEGED TO HAVE GRACE THE PAGES OF BBB AND WE CAN GUARANTEE YOU HIS INTERVIEW WON'T DISAPPOINT.





**Bizarre Beyond Belief:** We understand your passion for soccer was a primary focus for you since the age of 9, were you always interested in art at this age or did it develop later?

DOES: I was always interested in drawing and I had an obsession with practicing my signature. My interest in graffiti developed when I was in my early teens wandering the streets of my hometown. My eyes were drawn to the tags and soon after I discovered a wall in a hidden tunnel next to the trackside. This place opened up a whole new world for me.

**BBB:** Though completely different in practice, did your soccer career help you develop your artistic method in any way?

DOES: I was a professional soccer player from the age of 16 to 28. As such discipline and dedication have been engrained as a way of life. To some extent this defines the way I go about my work nowadays. I can spend hours and hours on a small patch of one canvas and I don't have any trouble focusing.

**BBB:** Once your soccer career came to an end, did you

feel as if it was a blessing in disguise?

DOES: In a way yes. I used to train twice a day every day of the week and by the time I had to call it quits, I had had many injuries and surgeries. Trying to get back to your old level after an injury is difficult and mentally challenging. After I was forced to give up my soccer career I had much more time to travel and focus on what I had secretly been doing for a long time.

**BBB:** As an artist from the Netherlands, how do you feel your country's landscape has











I DISCOVERED A WALL IN A HIDDEN TUNNEL NEXT TO THE TRACKSIDE. THIS PLACE OPENED UP A WHOLE NEW WORLD FOR ME.





played a role in your artistic practice?

DOES: My work is always a product of my surroundings and therefore I'm sure that my work is somehow influenced by the Dutch vibe and landscape. However, I am not particularly influenced by the Dutch landscape. It's mainly travelling to other countries that has really broadened my mind and perspective.

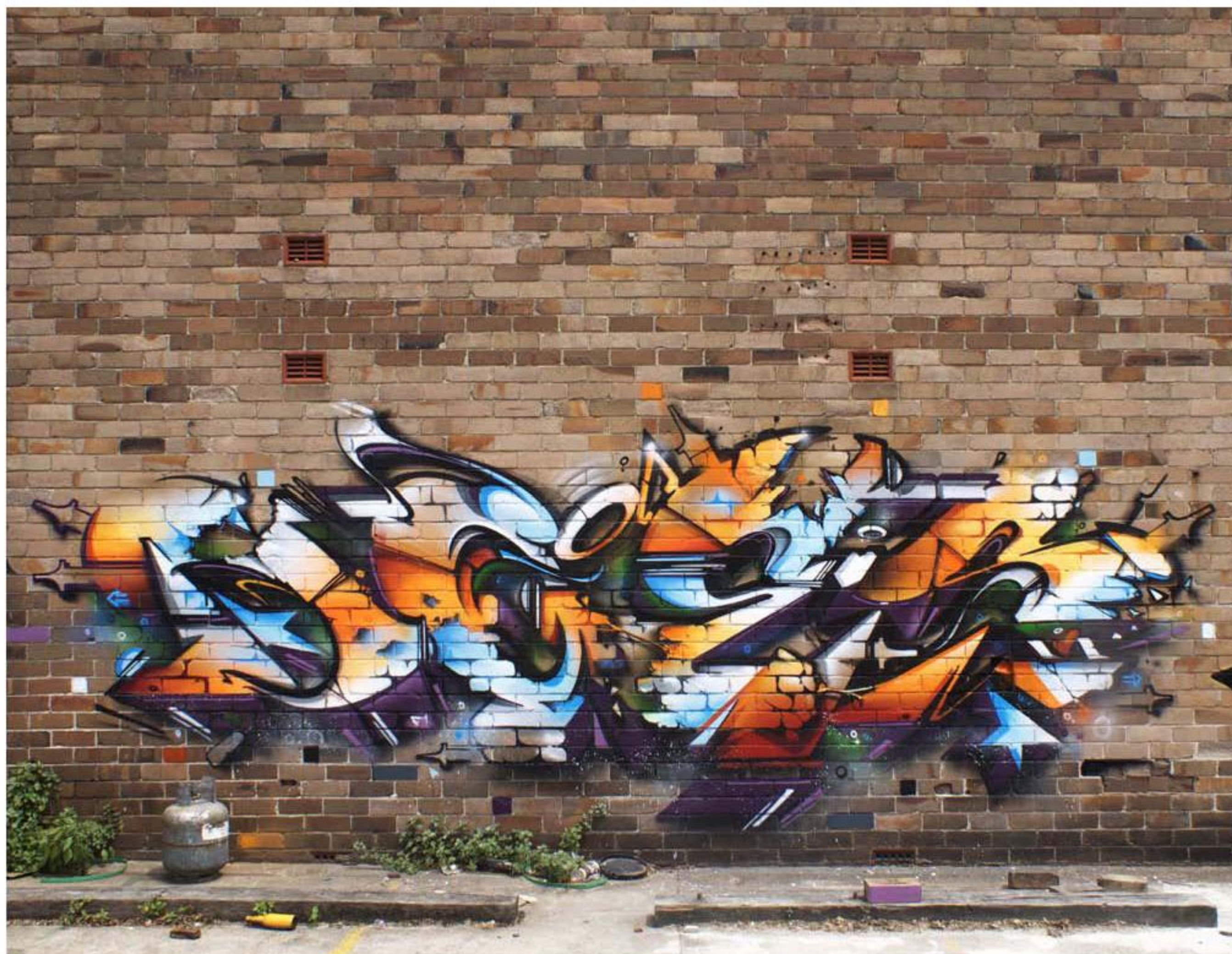
BBB: LoveLetters Crew has reached international fame status, how has your crew helped with your development as both an artist and a person?

DOES: Being part of a creative collective and seeing other artists around me blossom is inspiring. All the writers involved in LoveLetters have their own expertise and this makes for a great creative

mixture. On a personal level I have learnt a lot from Nash, Tumki and Chas.

BBB: Does is a powerful word. What was it about the word or the letters, D, O, E, S that drew you to using this as an alias?

DOES: I first heard the name DOES during a soccer match and it appealed to me because the word suggests taking







action: 'He who does creates'. Besides the meaning of the word, I choose DOES as I like the shapes of all the individual letters.

**BBB: Your work utilizes an exorbitant amount of colours and techniques, is your approach premeditated or improvised?**

DOES: It's a mixture of preparation and improvisation. The only guideline that I generally bring to a wall is a rough outline of the letters.

The rest is decided upon at the wall and the colours are often a mixture of what is available and what suits the surrounding area.

**BBB: From drawing to murals, your work is very detailed and meticulous, can you describe your approach to each medium?**

DOES: I very much enjoy using different media. It's a challenge to use and experiment with new materials. When I work with acrylics and brush it takes

a lot of time and I need to be patient. Working with pencil and markers is much faster, but more prone to error; with markers you can't afford a mistake as you can't erase or touch up anything.

**BBB: If you were to be in the studio during a big drawing session, what would be the top 5 albums (by which artist) on your playlist?**

DOES: My top 5 changes over time and my taste in music is quite broad. At the moment

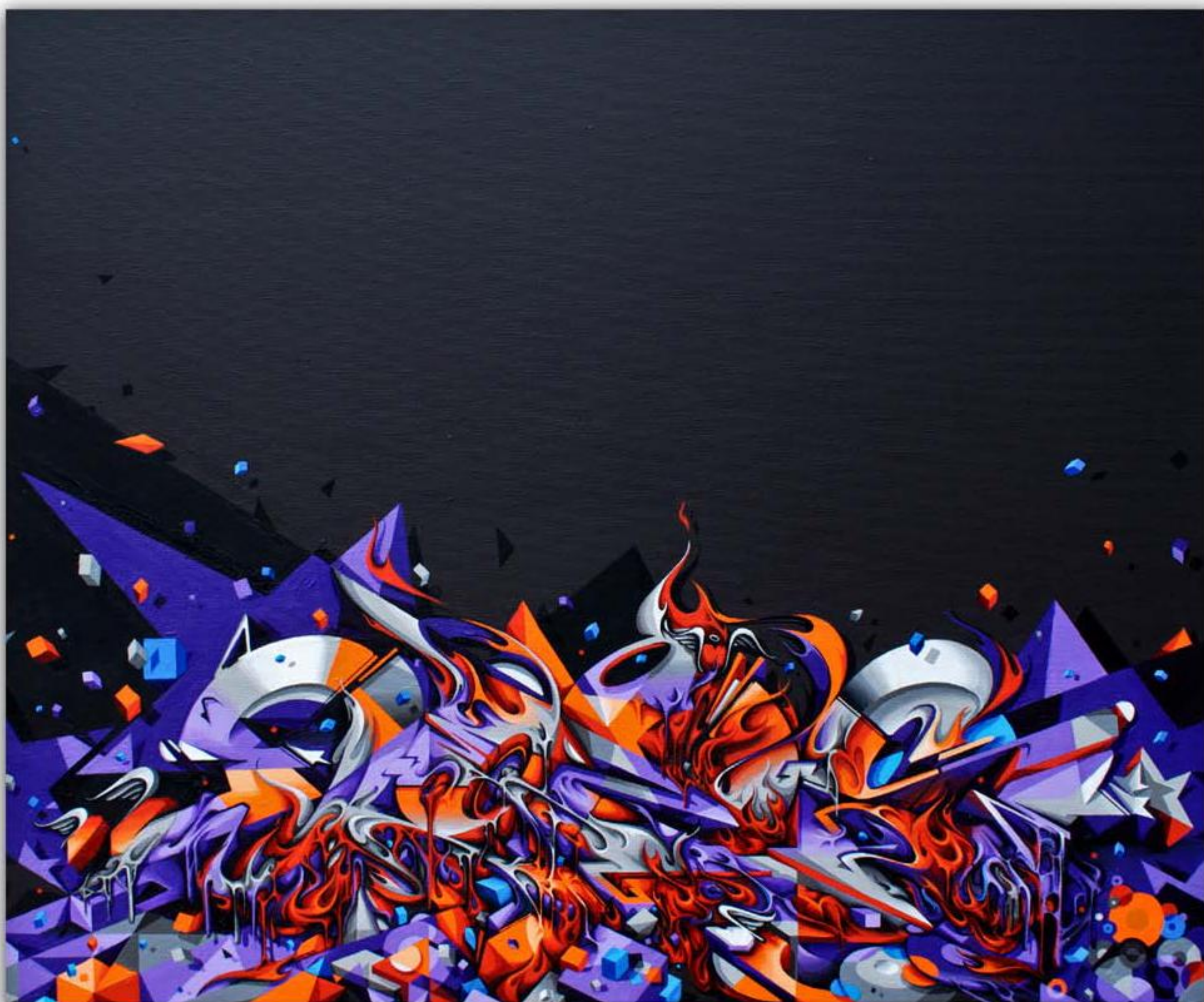












I like to listen to Novastar and Eddie Vedder. A few years ago I was quite fond of hardcore albums.

**BBB: If you were on the run from the police and you could only bring three things with you, not art related, which would you pick and why?**

DOES: My girl, my camera

and my phone.

**BBB: It seems as if you are a very busy man, what should friends and fans be on the lookout for in 2013?**

DOES: A lot of good things have happened already and there is plenty more to come. I am currently in Melbourne Australia where I had a

show to exhibit the results of the Endless Perspectives project at the End-to-End building site. When I'm back in Europe I'll be preparing for an exhibition in Athens and soon after Athens I'm flying to Beirut, Abu Dhabi and Ecuador. I'll keep you posted on my travels via - [www.digitaldoes.com](http://www.digitaldoes.com).





BBB: Is there any final sayings or words of wisdom you would like to leave the

readers with?

DOES: Feel free to ask

me anything via [does@digitaldoes.com](mailto:does@digitaldoes.com).

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[www.digitaldoes.com](http://www.digitaldoes.com)

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